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ABSTRACT

These papers represent applications of linguistics in Australian Aboriginal contexts, not only from a language viewpoint, but encompassing the interactions of language, society, politics, and culture. They include: "Loanwords: Ours or Theirs?" (Velma J. Leeding); "We Spell It 'Gooniyandi'" (David Street and Topsy Chestnut); "An Orthography Chosen By Those Who Speak Gooniyandi" (Joyce Hudson); "Misunderstanding Aboriginal English: The Role of Socio-Cultural Context" (Diana Eades); "Linguistics and the Land Rights in the Northern Territory" (David Nash); "Linguistic Considerations of Land Tenure in Western Arnhem Land" (Sue Kesteven); "Teaching Creative Writing to Aboriginal Children in Urban Primary Schools" (Brian Gray); "Rationale for the LIRP2 Method of Teaching English as a Second Language" (Joan Kale); "What is the Minimum Language Proficiency Necessary for English-Medium Training?" (David R. Richards); and "The Place of Linguistics in Teacher Training for Aborigines and Islanders" (Neil Chadwick). (Most papers contain references.) (NAV)

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FURTHER APPLICATIONS OF LINGUISTICS TO AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL CONTEXTS

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Further Applications of Linguistics to Australian
Aboriginal Contexts

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years the full scope of the field of 'linguistics' has been progressively discovered -- or rediscovered. Various sub-fields (e.g. sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, anthropological linguistics, applied linguistics etc.) have come into their own, and the full human, socio-cultural complexity of language has been brought into prominence. As a result the applicability of linguistics (broadly interpreted) has expanded while at the same time the ability of linguists to present definitive 'solutions' to a range of practical problems has decreased. The interplay of linguistic and non-linguistic factors is often so complex that a variety of approaches might each be equally valid for different reasons. This is so even in matters which might once have seemed to some linguists to be purely linguistic, such as orthography design, the teaching of reading semantics, and translation.

Conflict may, and still does, arise -- between linguists and educators, linguists and anthropologists, linguists and administrators and so on -- because of differing emphases, differing outlooks and differing objectives. Each side in such a conflict is often very naive with regard to the areas of expertise of the other. Fortunately, however, a growing inter-disciplinary perspective is permitting some of this naivety to be recognised and rectified.

The papers presented in this volume, like those in the last (McKay and Sommer eds 1982), represent applications of linguistics in Australian Aboriginal contexts -- but not merely the application of linguistics in splendid isolation; a number of these papers make it clear that linguistics in its narrow sense can be useful and even valuable, but that it is certainly not sufficient to the resolution of every problem.

Eades, for instance, argues that an overly narrow linguistic view of Aboriginal people in the south east of Australia has failed to recognise their continuing social, cultural and even linguistic Aboriginality while at the same time precipitating misunderstanding and potential conflict. Kesteven and Nash, in separate papers, each testify to the relevance of linguistic study in the area of land claims under the **Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act 1976**. Such linguistic study must be sufficiently broadly based to embrace sociolinguistic and anthropological issues. At the same time both authors make it abundantly clear that linguistics is only one contributor among many to the understanding of Aboriginal claims to land. Leeding makes out a clear case for the view that the spelling of loanwords is not purely a linguistic issue of phonology or etymology, but rather an attitudinal one relating to language status, self confidence, readability and ultimately to the integrity and maintenance of a language. Finally Hudson, like McKay in the earlier volume (McKay 1982), argues that orthography development is not the exclusive preserve of the linguist, but that non-linguistic factors and attitudes may well be even more significant.

The nature of Aboriginality is a crucial and sometimes controversial matter. It is well recognised that there is no unified, monolithic 'Aboriginal' people, except in the loosest sense. There is a wide range of different groupings with different membership criteria and often vastly different, sometimes opposing, points of view. It seems nevertheless true to say that there is an underlying core of Aboriginality which is common to the most divergent groups. While the present papers do not set out to define Aboriginality in any way some of them point to factors which are of relevance.

Eades takes an uncompromising stand over superficial features -- such as skin colour and the active use of a 'traditional' Aboriginal language -- being not a necessary condition for the possession of a genuine Aboriginality. The social and cultural Aboriginality found in south east Queensland is revealed linguistically in the Aboriginal English of the region. Eades argues that linguists' pre-occupation with 'traditional' Aboriginal languages has led them to the belief that Aboriginality has died along with the traditional languages. She maintains that evidence shows an Aboriginality to be alive and well. English has been adapted to the situation and the socio-cultural milieu. Linguists in turn need to adapt their linguistics to recognise and understand Aboriginality of this more subtle type.

Leeding, like Sayers in the earlier volume (Sayers 1982), is convinced that the mere use by Aboriginal speakers of loan-words from English or any other language is not in itself a detraction from Aboriginality. She argues that Anindilyakwa speakers adapt such loanwords in varying degrees to the structures and systems of their own language thus making them legitimate components of that language, albeit of recent origin. It follows from this that the source language orthographic system is no longer appropriate to these words. Rather, their new-found Aboriginality should be embodied in their orthographic representation within the receptor language.

In the educational use of English, Aboriginality might be thought to become less influential. In three different areas -- proficiency scales, ESL teaching and creative writing -- Richards, Kale and Gray respectively demonstrate that general theoretical and methodological developments have considerable applicability in Aboriginal contexts as long as appropriate adaptations are made in detail and emphasis. In fact it is interesting to note that the very mechanical and often artificial approaches of an earlier generation of linguists have given way to approaches which give more recognition to human creativity, variation and naturalness. This direction of development is a positive step in non-Aboriginal contexts and is more consonant with general Aboriginal approaches as well.

In their various different ways each of the papers collected here makes the same point: Aborigines are different socially and culturally from the surrounding European-based society. These differences often colour relationships and contacts between the two groups. Language and language use reveal a lot about the differences. The study of language and its use can be of immense benefit in promoting mutual understanding and effective communication -- both essential for social justice and stability.

Now to look at the papers in turn: Leeding, as we have noted, shows how socio-political considerations lead to an Aboriginal language being given equal privilege with English in being permitted to 'naturalise' loanwords in spelling. Solid benefits in attitudes and in readability are to be gained from the use of the Anindilyakwa writing system for writing English loanwords in Anindilyakwa publications. In contrast an insistence on the English spelling for English loans only serves to minimise the accessibility of literacy to Anindilyakwa speakers. Loanwords are here to stay in most, if not all, Aboriginal languages. In spoken usage they are part of the Aboriginal language system. Leeding presents a firm case that written usage should mirror this.

Hudson, like Leeding, gives precedence to socio-political considerations over narrowly linguistic ones, in advocating the adoption of a Gooniyandi writing system modelled by Aboriginal people on the English one. In doing so she gives a welcome attention to speakers of the language (such as, in this instance, Street and Chestnut) whose opinions all too often receive only token acknowledgement. Some might claim that she has gone too far. Hudson herself hints at the complexity of the 'issues of orthography choice'. One might argue that few Aboriginal language speakers -- if any -- have adequate understanding of the linguistic and psychological 'issues' (as summarised for example by Stubbs 1980). One might also argue that many linguists have shown scant understanding of the specific social and cultural 'issues' affecting Aboriginal people in orthography choice. Either form of deficiency in understanding the 'issues of orthography choice' can have undesirable, even disastrous, consequences.

Eades has touched upon something that sensitive communicators with Aboriginal people have 'felt in their bones' all along. The same utterance can have fundamentally different interpretations and connotations when two parties to a conversation come from different socio-cultural backgrounds and have different expectations from the conversation. The research she reports on from south east

Queensland shows by implication how much Aboriginal people from that area have in common with those from more 'traditional' Aboriginal groups further north and west in terms of speech rules and socio-cultural background.

Land claims have proved, over the last few years, to be vitally important to many Aboriginal groups. Linguists have often been prominent among those advocating the claims of Aboriginal groups and in collecting evidence to support them. Some have acted as interpreters in the hearings. Nash and Kesteven outline in their papers some of the contributions linguistics has made in establishing land tenure in support of land claims or for other purposes -- Nash in relation to central Australia and Kesteven in relation to the 'Uranium Province' of western Arnhem Land. In one sense this is one of the most distinctive applications of linguistics to an Australian Aboriginal context. In another it is simply a specific example of the age-old concerns of any linguist -- or anthropologist for that matter -- who is worth his salt.

Gray treats a theme which was inroduced by the Zorcs in the last volume (Zorc and Zorc 1982), that of creative writing. The Zorcs discussed the place of creative writing in a language teaching program and some of the ways and means of teaching such a program. Gray has, perhaps, a broader view of 'creative writing', while at the same time endorsing its place in developing confidence, understanding and language skills. Gray's main thrust -- and a very welcome one -- is in treating writing as a process, rather than focussing on the end product. He explores in some detail the implications of this, including the importance of progressively editing and rewriting a work, the variety of text conventions which writers observe in various genres, the significance of exposure to written language, and the importance of text structure and cohesion in writing. While in a sense good teachers have been covering this all along, the emphasis on process writing over recent years has directed attention to this again. With appropriate support, Aboriginal children can develop effective writing skills. Such support must, however, take into account the divergence between the socio-cultural and linguistic background of the children on the one hand and that assumed by the formal school system and published reading and writing materials on the other.

Kale outlines an English as a Second Language method developed in the context of Aboriginal schools in the Northern Territory. As in Gray's paper, the ideas presented also have very general relevance for children of many different backgrounds. The LIRP^2 method attempts to redress the balance between receptive and productive competence in favour of the receptive side initially, on the model of natural child language acquisition sequences. This builds on the much-remarked observational skills of Aboriginal learners.

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The role of English in Aboriginal education is often problematic. To many, educators and Aborigines alike, English is an essential part of the formal educational process. More rarely in practice, educational programs for Aboriginal people are heavily based on the use of Aboriginal languages as medium and subject matter of instruction. Even in these programs English often rears its head as not totally avoidable.[1] The prominence of English normally increases as Aboriginal students pass through primary, secondary and on to tertiary education. If standards and levels are set unrealistically high many extremely capable students from non-English-speaking backgrounds are excluded from otherwise suitable courses at the outset or, worse, fail miserably during their course. This tends to perpetuate the language barrier to formal educational achievement for Aboriginal people.

Richards, in his paper, faces this issue squarely in relation to Batchelor College, an Aboriginal teacher education college of the Northern Territory Department of Education. He outlines how normally-expected tertiary English entry standards can and should be rescaled for the College's programs. He has developed a modification of the widely used Australian Second Language Proficiency Rating (ASLPR) scale for use in Batchelor College. This is a serious attempt to outline realistic assessment standards and performance objectives for Aboriginal teacher trainees from predominantly non-English-speaking backgrounds in an English-based tertiary course.

In teacher training programs the need for language based study for the student teacher from a traditional Aboriginal background and for the novice teacher from an urban European English-speaking background overlap at many points, as Chadwick points out. The centrality of linguistic communication in the educational context and in the total social environment necessitates the inclusion of a broadly based language studies component within any teacher education program. Such studies can contribute significantly to a teacher's effectiveness in cross-cultural (or monocultural) teaching-learning situations.

Once again it has been impossible to secure papers on very relevant topics such as lexicography (though for this see Austin ed. 1983), translation and interpreting, discourse analysis, language planning and so on. Nevertheless many of the major themes in the application of linguistics to Australian Aboriginal contexts are touched on in this volume and its predecessor (McKay and Sommer eds 1982).

The consideration of linguistics in terms of Aboriginality highlights the need for linguists to take a broad, socially aware view of the scope of their own field. The interrelationships between language, culture, society, politics, education, economics and other aspects are complex and very significant within Australian society. Linguistics (appropriately defined) remains relevant and applicable in this context.

G R McKay
B A Sommer

Note

1. Such a program is the Aboriginal Literacy Worker course (at certificate level) of Darwin Community College's School of Australian Linguistics. Mixed language classes are normally taught in English (as the only common language of staff and all students) but the Aboriginal languages of the students, not English, are the main focus of study. English is a service subject only.

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LOANWORDS:
OURS OR THEIRS?*

Velma J Leeding

NT Department of Education

Opinions have differed over the years concerning the spelling of words which Aborigines have borrowed from English and now use constantly when conversing in their own languages. The pronunciation of these loanwords constitutes a continuum from forms totally assimilated to the sound systems of the Aboriginal languages to those which are identical with an English speaker's pronunciation.

With the advent of bilingual education for Aboriginal children in Northern Territory schools, the linguists and teachers had to make 'on the spot' decisions about the spelling of such words in classroom literature. This was not consistent from language to language, community to community, and the need for a more carefully researched basis for decisions became apparent.

A discussion by Departmental linguists foreshadowed a policy statement issued by the Department of Education, Northern Territory, for all bilingual programs.[1] Words borrowed from English are to be spelt in the local vernacular's orthographic system for all school literature and usage.

The purpose of this paper is to outline the factors underlying the decision. The experiences of all the linguists were similar but the issues discussed here come from my own personal research on Groote Eylandt over a period of three years preceding the forming of the policy.[2]

On my arrival at Umbakumba in 1975 I found that, while the community had requested bilingual education, the Aboriginal teaching assistants firmly believed that their language was deficient and could not be used as a medium of instruction in the classroom -- 'only English has enough words'. Upon enquiry and observation, I discovered that this attitude could be attributed to the fact that the Aborigines could not teach in the vernacular without using words borrowed from English, e.g. terms for ruler, table, chalk, pencil, colours and number. I later also discerned that feelings of individual or racial inferiority were connected with the belief that their language was seen to be inferior to English. Thus the usage and spelling of English derived loanwords seemed to me to be of greater significance than just the mechanics of using one set of symbols versus another.

It was also observed that non-Aboriginals had preconceived ideas with strong emotional overtones about the 'rightness' of English spelling. They were not aware that this conveyed an attitude of superiority, thus reinforcing daily the feelings of inferiority in the Aborigines. Some also believed the vernacular was inadequate for educational purposes.

To put the matter into perspective, the issues needed to be considered on more objective grounds, taking into consideration much wider implications of a practical nature. These are outlined below, together with some comments on how changes in thinking can be encouraged.

1. All languages have borrowed words

English has a large number of loanwords, many of which are not identified by the speakers themselves because the origins are lost in antiquity. Recent additions are usually recognised more easily.

English loanwords	**Language of origin**
beef, garage, cricket	(Old) French
school, eucalyptus, marmalade	Greek
turban	Persian
sheik(h), candy	Arabic
bamboo	Malay
bandana	Hindustani
kangaroo, nulla nulla	Aboriginal languages
pizza	Italian
sputnik, cosmonaut	Russian
chocolate	Mexican
tea	Chinese

All languages borrow words as the need arises. Non-Aboriginal teachers needed to be reminded that English is full of loanwords which are spelt according to rules made by the 'owners' of the English language. The Aborigines needed to realise that, just as white Australians claimed borrowed words as their own, so too could Aboriginal Australians. This information had the effect of putting both languages on the same level.

Aborigines agreed in principle with the above but remained sceptical. It was acknowledged that there were frequently two distinct pronunciations, e.g.

bajangkwula	bicycle
diraka	car, truck
wana	one
kidaya	guitar

Real acceptance of the ownership of the words only came through vernacular literacy. At the end of a formal (i.e. structured) literacy course, the Aboriginal teachers assistants were asked to write a list of English-derived words using only the Anindilyakwa alphabet. Even for those who pronounced the words in the same way as a native English speaker, there were no problems in spelling them accurately in the vernacular. It was at this point that the Aborigines recognised that what they could write without resorting to extra English letters could be claimed as part of their own language.

2. Words borrowed from languages other than English

Contact between Groote Eylandters and Macassan traders ceased at least half a century ago. Aborigines over 35 years of age still volunteer information about the origin of Macassan words now integrated into Anindilyakwa. These words largely conform to the phonological structure of the receptor language.

bangkiiya	'steel axe'
dimbala	'cloth'
barrida	'rice'
jamba	'tamarind tree'
lyibalyiba	'canoe'

Other words are cognates with those of Nunggubuyu, the neighbouring mainland language. These words are identified by Aborigines as being the same or similar in both languages. (The spelling differs because of the local orthographies.)

Nunggubuyu	**Anindilyakwa**	
dhurrabada	dirrabada	'spear'
mukwumukwa	mugumugu	'deep sea'

While there were differing opinions about the spelling of English-derived loanwords there were no problems about the spelling of words which were borrowed from other languages. The Anindilyakwa orthography was automatically used by the Aborigines and non-Aborigines. The latter usually were not aware the words were borrowed.

Loanwords from different sources had, therefore, been treated inconsistently. By adopting the above method, all loanwords are treated in the same way and a knowledge of the origin of a word is unnecessary when using the alphabet.

As has happened in other places, a few early English borrowings were adapted and spelt with only the vernacular alphabet. No adverse comments were heard from the Aborigines even though these had been in adult literature for some time before my arrival.

yingibayindana	she bought it (-bay- = 'buy')
diraki-langwa	from the truck (diraki- = 'truck')

When all loanwords were spelt consistently in the vernacular orthography, it was no longer necessary to find out the time of borrowing in order to know how to spell the word.

3. Code switching or mix-mix

English-derived words are affixed in the same way as Anindilyakwa words. When both orthographies are used within the same word, Aboriginal literates have to switch spelling systems, i.e. from a phonic approach for their own phonemic alphabet to a sight word approach for English. (Hyphens before suffixes are part of the orthographical system because of long words.)

Jesus-langwa	from Jesus
zoo-wa	to the zoo
warnung-Israel-uma	people of Israel

Code switching or mix-mix appears to be increasing at public gatherings where more than one language group exists but where multilingualism occurs. It is very similar to that of the Philippines (Sibayan 1977:22). For example:

> They came yarringkwa and kinalikajamurra arningkwaya to Umbakumba.
>
> 'They came yesterday and will go to Umbakumba tomorrow.'

If this mix-mix becomes the pattern of daily local speech, the Aborigines will at that time need to review the present policy.

The number of loanwords is still only a small percentage of total speech. This may or may not increase in the written form. Currently, the Aboriginal editors replace a loanword with a traditional word if one is available and some Aborigines will do the same when transcribing a tape even if an Aboriginal elder has recorded the story. When I asked the reason for this, I was told that the 'proper words' should be used in books so that children could learn them. It was followed by a comment that even adults were getting lazy in their speech and forgetting good words. (There was a noticeable lack of use of terms for flora and fauna with a general English word used as a replacement, e.g. 'flower' instead of spcific names for lilies, gum blossoms and fruit-bearing trees.)

4. From independent to dependent literacy

The first class who completed literacy said: 'Now we are the same as white people -- we can write our own language, too'. This statement indicated that a feeling of equality had been engendered by becoming literate in the vernacular.

At the end of literacy courses, Aborigines were confident that they could pick up any story in their own language and read it -- some admittedly with more fluency than others. With the advent of booklets from outside the community in which loanwords were spelt in English script, this confidence was undermined. Those who were not able to read everything in English had to find someone else to tell them the words. Their frustration, heard in the tone of voice and seen in their body movements, was very apparent. The older Aborigines, who were not fully literate in English, were the ones who lost most prestige because they became dependent on young people who were more literate in English but who could not read the vernacular.

Instead of just giving the English, I re-wrote the words in the vernacular, e.g. dirakda 'tractor', kirayida 'grader', bakawu 'backhoe'. The words were then read quickly and correctly.

When all words, traditional or borrowed are written in vernacular spelling, the literates can be independent and decode unseen words for themselves. The confidence of new literates is very fragile.

5. Acceptance by Aborigines literate in English

The objection chiefly voiced by non-Aboriginals is that Aborigines who speak English well and read and write it competently will object to the use of vernacular script for loanwords as a backward step. In discussing this with Aborigines, I found that they feared that they would be forced to pronounce the written words in the vernacular sound pattern. Once they were assured that an individual's pronunciation was not required to change, no objections were made. This was explained by supplying different local pronunciations of Australian words or by comparing Australian and American pronunciation where there was no spelling difference.

Aborigines are justifiably proud of their attainments in English literacy. As English is then the source of their own prestige and role in the community, English is seen as the prestige language. In recommending English spelling of loanwords they are usually not aware that its presence further reinforces their feeling that the vernacular is inferior to English. Adequate recognition of the role and expertise of such Aborigines must be given. Their co-operation must be sought in implementing a system suitable for **all** children and lesser-skilled adults, not just the 'elitist' group.

Two communilects already existed between the Groote Eylandt communities (as also occurs in other Aboriginal language groups) and literates were taught to read the words but to pronounce them in their normal fashion. This principle was simply extended to cover the loanwords and no problems occurred when reading aloud, e.g. jaba is pronounced as [ǯɔp^h] as in English or [ʈap^wa] as in Anindilyakwa.

For the bilingual-biliterate who can read common English words quickly, the vernacularising of these words will cause a slowing down at first but fluency is quickly regained with a little exposure to the new system. Bilinguals who only read Anindilyakwa by broadly applying the phonic rules for English experience greater problems and have a greater resistance at first because they do not have the necessary literacy skills to handle vernacular reading and writing with competence and confidence.

6. Older adults classified with children

It was also suggested that the vernacular spelling be used only for the children and the older adults who could not write English. This was thought to be an unfortunate combination inferring that the ability and skills of the most knowledgable group in the community equated with that of young children.

One spelling system for all age groups was deemed to be wiser and much easier to handle in the production of literature.

7. Personal names

The spelling of one's own name is a personal matter and often outside of the general spelling system. It is only altered by the individual.

Umbakumba children use English names at school which utilise different letters from English. In order to prevent confusion at the outset of school days, an attempt was made to introduce and teach the children's Aboriginal names. This did not work because the names are not in daily use for most of the young children. It was then decided that each child would be taught to read and write his English name, using letters not in the vernacular, but that the phonics be taught during English literacy lessons at a later date. No problems arose.

8. The end justifies the means

There is strong feeling amongst some non-Aboriginals that, if a child has to learn English spelling anyway, he may as well do it that way in the first place. Such a statement presupposes that English reading and writing is the ultimate goal. The **transfer** model of bilingual education would endorse this attitude because its exponents see education in the vernacular as a means of ultimately achieving better facility in English. The maintenance model, however, has been introduced in the Northern Territory and the aim is to give the children facility in two languages and cultures, and a more positive self-image.

The visual display of English words which look very odd in a page of vernacular writing will not help in achieving this goal. It will indicate, however subtly, that English words are needed to tell a story. Small children do not differentiate between traditional and borrowed words unless their attention is drawn to them.

More importantly, the introduction of English spelling into vernacular literature means that two different orthographic systems are being introduced simultaneously. If children are to write their own stories, they must be able to handle the English phonics or learn by rote a quantity of English sight words. Because English has words which do not fit the pattern, some teachers appear to be unaware of the strong orthographic system which underlies English spelling. Teaching two systems at once, even if one is only partially taught by a sight-word method, leads to confusion or lack of comprehension in children who do not divide their daily speech into traditional versus loanwords.

Conclusion

English-derived loanwords are both ours **and** theirs. Difficulties have largely arisen because non-Aboriginals have, consciously or unconsciously, claimed sole ownership and Aborigines have not been aware that all languages borrow words and claim them as their own when in common usage. When dual ownership is recognised there can be dual spellings. The ability to read and write in English does not then become a prerequisite to being able to read and write in the Aboriginal language.

Interestingly enough, the decision to use vernacular spelling of all loanwords correlates with what has been done elsewhere in the world. English itself makes spelling adjustments to recent borrowings according to traditional conventions (auackenbush 1974:61), e.g. Russian **kosmonaut** became English **cosmonaut**. The Japanese selected one of its three orthographies, katakana syllabary, for writing recent borrowings. There are two alphabets for Serbo-Croatian and, in Canada, for writing English-derived loanwords, the English spelling is favoured by those who use **latinica**, and the pronunciation spelling is favoured in **ĉirilica** (Surducki 1967:123). What is of particular note is that the nation borrowing the words decided on the spelling. Linguists in the Department of Education interacted in a meaningful way with the Aborigines before recommending the above policy.

The practice of spelling loanwords in the vernacular is now well established at Umbakumba and presents no problem to the bilingual-biliterate Aborigines or to those learning literacy skills for the first time. There must, however, be freedom for each individual to pronounce loanwords in his own way. Bilinguals automatically use a form close to English when conversing with non-Aboriginals but one closer to vernacular adaptations when speaking to monolingual Aborigines. Non-Aboriginal teachers have found the spelling acceptable and suitable in the classroom.

The choice of spelling loanwords is not simply a matter of being able to handle various symbols but is a much deeper emotional issue. It is not just the adding of more graphemes to the vernacular system in order to accommodate Aborigines formally educated in English (Fries and Pike 1956:56). The argument that, as Aborigines must learn to spell English words eventually they may as well do it in the beginning, overlooks undesirable consequences that this has for the Aborigines' self-image (Hurd 1975:51). It infers that English spelling is superior in some undefined way to vernacular spelling.

Through the advent of bilingual education, Umbakumba Aborigines learned that both English and Anindilyakwa were viable means of instruction in the classroom. Through the written form of loanwords they realised that their language was being given equal status with English. The ensuing result was greater recognition of the flexibility and richness of the Aboriginal language by all participants, and prestige for its speakers.

Notes

1 The policy statement issued by the Department of Education, Northern Territory, is as follows:

> With the introduction of European technology and culture into Aboriginal communities, the borrowing of a large number of English words has followed. These loans have become Aboriginalised according to the phonological and grammatical structure of each language, including the addition of Aboriginal language affixes to English-derived stems. In some cases, these words are no longer recognised as foreign, English-derived words. It must be accepted that these are now a legitimate part of the respective Aboriginal languages and should be included in materials used in the bilingual program to meet the needs of the children's actual cross-cultural situation. Their representation should be that of the language's orthography, hence **mutika**.
>
> When the English words (from which these are derived) are taught in connection with European-Australian culture in English, their standard English pronunciations and spelling should be used, hence **motor car**. (Recommendation from the Linguists' Conference, May 1979 -- later ratified.)

The two orthographies are thus kept separate.

2. All information in this paper was gathered whiledemployed by the Department of Education (Northern Territory, formerly Commonwealth) as linguist in the bilingual education program in the Umbakumba School. Discussions began with a group of seven teaching assistants but was later extended to other literates in the community.

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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

WE SPELL IT 'GOONIYANDI'

Notes on the new Gunian orthography

David Street, Bayulu Community and
Topsy Chestnut, Junjuwa Community

In 1983 when the Yiyili Community were able to finance a Gooniyandi language program in their Community School they employed a linguist, Joyce Hudson, to help. She helped the Gooniyandi teachers to work out games and songs and draw pictures to use while they taught the children. So at that time it was only an oral language program.

But the Community wanted the language written down and wanted the children to learn to read Gooniyandi as well as speak it. Another linguist who had been working on the language in 1982, Bill McGregor, had worked out an alphabet for Gooniyandi based on the Walmajarri alphabet in use in the area. This alphabet worked well for Gooniyandi but was hard for those who couldn't already read Walmajarri.

A meeting was held between the Yiyili School linguist and Gooniyandi speakers from Yiyili and Bayulu. They chose Gooniyandi people to help with the language program. They decided to give us the job of working out how to write Gooniyandi. Penny Madeline and Judy Cox are the two oldest women of the Community at Yiyili and they know Gooniyandi best so they were chosen to make decisions about the right way to pronounce words and the right way to say things in Gooniyandi. They go to the Yiyili School each day to help the linguist.

We met together with the linguist to work out an alphabet and she presented the different possibilities, then we thought about it for a few weeks and decided on an alphabet to try. It was used in the Yiyili School for six months and now we have decided to keep on using it. The letters for writing Gooniyandi are:

a, ar, b, d, d̲, g, i, ii, j, l, l̲, lh, ly,
m, n, n̲, ng, nh, ny, oo, r, th, w, y.

With this alphabet we sometimes use the same letter for more than one sound:

d is used when it sounds like a **d**, or a **t**, and also for what they write in Walmajarri as **rr**.
g is used for **g** or **k**.
b is used for **b** or **p**.
oo is used for what they write in Walmajarri as **u** and **uwu**.

One problem we had was with the letters **ng**. Sometimes it stands for one sound as in the word **thinga** 'foot' and other times it is two sounds. We decided to write it with a full stop between when it is two sounds such as in the word **man.ga** 'ear'.

We have decided to write Gooniyandi this way to make it easier for our people who have had schooling in English.

In the past some linguists have written our language name as Gunian. At the Community meeting this year the people decided that the language name is really Gooniyandi and they would like everyone to use that name. So would you please use this name in future. We spell it GOONIYANDI.

AN ORTHOGRAPHY CHOSEN BY THOSE WHO SPEAK GOONIYANDI

Explanatory Notes

Joyce Hudson

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After 15 years working at Fitzroy Crossing with Walmajarri, and recently also with Kriol, I had been thoroughly convinced of the value of the linguistically based orthographies currently in use for writing Aboriginal languages. These have been proved to be practical for those adults whose initial literacy is in a traditional language. However over recent years several incidents caused me to reconsider this. The first was a report I heard of comments made by an Aboriginal linguist at the Aboriginal Languages Association meeting at Batchelor in 1982. I understand she said that Aboriginal languages should be immediately readable by Aborigines (i.e. those educated in English) without a special literacy course. Although the Walmajarri representatives at the meeting immediately defended the Walmajarri orthography in private, the report of this criticism raised the question in my mind as to whether we linguists are indeed the best judges of orthographies.

In the last three years I have had contact with Aborigines in the Fitzroy Crossing area who have been through the school system and who wanted help to write their own or their parents' languages. Some sounds caused difficulty for all and by guiding them to use the Walmajarri orthography as a basis, I found they were confused and soon stopped trying. The phonemes in question are the alveolar central consonant written as **rr** and the high back vowel written as **u**. Of course other phonemes with no equivalent in English are also a problem.

The argument is often raised by linguists that people can learn to use these symbols with a little help, and that is certainly true. I know many who have learned the system and are happy with it. But I support the view that if Aborigines have mastered English literacy then they should be able to pick up material written in their own language and have reasonable success at reading it.

Early in 1983 when I was asked to help develop a Gooniyandi language revival program at Yiyili Aboriginal Community School I decided that I could not impose the usual linguistically approved orthoraphy on these people. I wanted to give them a chance to choose something else. In 1982 Bill McGregor had worked out an orthography for Gooniyandi based on the Walmajarri one and I have no fault to find with it. The materials he left at the school were most helpful.

By encouraging a different orthography I realised that I would be opening myself to the criticism of fellow linguists. Several things gave me courage to go ahead in spite of this.

(1) We are dealing with an Aboriginal language, so the decisions for writing it should be made by Aborigines from that language group.

(2) Gooniyandi is the language of a small number of people, probably not more than 150. Of these, most do not use it for everyday conversation anymore. At Yiyili, I have observed that Kriol is the language of the Community, and even those who are able to speak Gooniyandi use Kriol to communicate with the majority. This being the case we cannot expect to see a large literature develop in Gooniyandi. In fact all written materials will most likely eminate from the school program at Yiyili. Therefore a large volume of literature was not at stake if the chosen orthography did not prove suitable.

(3) Those who speak Gooniyandi but have not had the opportunity of literacy are generally older and not likely to learn to read in Gooniyandi now, so the future readers of this language will all approach it via English literacy. For them to have to be taught by an outsider in order to read their community language could only put them at an unnecessary disadvantage.

(4) Yiyili Aboriginal Community School, as an independent school, is able to make decisions about their language program without reference to outside organisations as would be the case in a government school program. Also there is no other Gooniyandi language program in progress which needed to be considered.

These factors meant that we on the Yiyili staff were in an ideal position to test an alternative orthography. At a Community meeting with representatives of all Gooniyandi speaking groups it was decided to appoint David Street and Topsy Chestnut as a committee to help work out details about spelling. Both are fluent in English, Walmajarri and Kriol as well as Gooniyandi and they are literate in English and Walmajarri. Both received primary school education in the Fitzroy Crossing area and later spent time in Perth. In the past David has worked with other linguists who have gathered Gooniyandi data for analysis. Neither is from the Yiyili Community where the language program is in progress. David is currently living at Bayulu and Topsy at Fitzroy Crossing. At the same meeting two women from Yiyili were chosen to be the final authorities on questions relating to dialect, vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar.

When working with David and Topsy I encouraged them to choose the symbol they preferred for each phoneme and at times I was caught by surprise at the choices they made. For example, the use of **ar** for the lengthened vowel was not one of the options I put to them but was their suggestion. This choice helped them decide in favour of the underlining for retroflexion rather than the **rC** which is in use in many languages. They commented on this being one of the difficulties in Walmajarri. In other situations I have observed that the use of **rC** is often read by English literates with the **r** attached to the preceding vowel, following Australian English practice. This leads to mispronunciation and therefore non-recognition of traditional language words: **marna** is read as [ma:na] instead of [mana].

Most of 1983 was taken up with making these decisions and testing them out informally as I wrote the language and worked with adults and children at Yiyili. The orthography David and Topsy chose and which is in use now is given below.

Consonants:

Stops, nasals, laterals, centrals and semi-vowels are listed in order:

bilabial	dental	alveolar	retroflex	alveo-palatal	velar
b	th	d	d	j	g
m	nh	n	n	ny	ng
	lh	l	l	ly	
		d	r		
w				y	

Vowels:

short	i,	a,	oo
long	ii,	ar,	oo

Glides: *iyi,, *ooayi, *oo, awoo

*Materials in use in the school in 1983 did not require use of these glides so they have not been tested.

There are potential problems of underdifferentiation in three areas: **d** is used for both alveolar stop and the central consonant; **oo** is used for both short and long high back vowels as well as the glide; the **ng** (velar nasal) and

ng (alveolar nasal plus velar stop) are differentiated by placing a period between them (**n.g**) for the latter, e.g. **man.ga** 'ear'.

Thardangga ngabga mar.
tha:r̃aŋga ŋabga ma:
dog-Ergative eat meat
'The dog is eating meat.'

Yooloongga yangginjingi baroowindi.
yuluŋga yaŋgind̡iŋi baruwindi
man-Ergative ask climb
'The man asked for a ride.'

'Malami,' migamini.
malami migamini
no he said
'"No," he said.'

Niyajiningi wad̲ngiri thinga.
niyad̡iniŋi wad̲ŋiri thiŋa
after that go foot
'After that he walked.'

From observing the children's speech and attempts to use Gooniyandi it seems very likely that in the future the distinction between the retroflex and alveolar series will be lost. The choice of symbol for writing the retroflex series is not likely to have any effect on this, as already the contrast is not perceived clearly by young people in oral work. Experience in Walmajarri suggests that retroflexion has a low functional load even for monolingual literates. Most tend not to write retroflexion correctly unless a great deal of focus is given to it. In Kriol which is the children's first language, retroflexion appears to be more allophonic than contrastive. However, use of one symbol (**d** and **oo**) for each of the two phoneme pairs could contribute to the loss of these distinctions in future Gooniyandi if the literature becomes the main means of preserving the language.

At this stage (the end of 1983) no one at Yiyili Aboriginal Community School could be said to be a fluent reader of Gooniyandi, but all those I've worked with were able to tackle new words with reasonable ease. Drafts of stories were read easily by a woman who speaks Gooniyandi and reads English well, as well as by David and Topsy. One teenage girl who was the main worker in the language program was assigned to collect Gooniyandi words from the old people for use in classroom work. She does not speak the language but with this orthography was able to write words quite accurately. The orthography will be tested more extensively in 1984 with materials which have been prepared to teach oral and written Gooniyandi to children at Yiyili.

There are some obvious problems with the approach set out here. One is that it is not always easy to find people who know a traditional language and who are also educated well enough in English to be able to understand the issues of orthography choice. This was one of the difficulties in 1968 when Eirlys Richards and I selected the orthography for Walmajarri. However, by now there must be some English literates in all language groups in Australia and if the Aboriginal community really want their language written then the difficulty will be overcome. It may mean that some Aborigines will need special training and the linguist will need much patience before orthography choices can be made. If the decision to write the language down is made by outsiders, members of the community may not be sufficiently interested or motivated to take the training necessary for them to contribute.

Another potential problem is that it could lead to each language having a different spelling system and making transfer across languages difficult. I have not heard Aborigines express this concern but have heard many complain that they could not readily transfer from English. At present they are required to make a difficult transfer between English and their own language. If most are to be involved in literacy in both English and traditional languages then this factor may be more significant than the ease of transfer between traditional languages. Historically, some of the choices for the Walmajarri orthography were made in order to provide this ease of transfer with neighbouring Western Desert languages (voiceless stops were used where voiced stops would have provided easier transfer to and from English). This turned out to be at the expense of ease of transfer between Walmajarri and English and yet the number of Aboriginal people who read both Walmajarri and Western Desert languages can be counted on the fingers of one hand. In other areas there may be more interaction of literature across languages making it more important to cater for this. On the other hand, we can be sure that everywhere there will be interaction with English and this may be the most significant factor to Aborigines who want their languages written.

MISUNDERSTANDING ABORIGINAL ENGLISH:
The Role of Socio-cultural Context

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1. Introduction

Aboriginal people in much of southern Australia no longer speak 'traditional' Aboriginal languages on a regular, everyday basis. While some of these people speak varieties of a pidgin- or creole-like Aboriginal English, the major language variety used by many Aboriginal people today is grammatically very close to Standard English.[1] Linguistic work has understandably been focused on more remote Aboriginal groups who still speak 'traditional'[2] Aboriginal languages in most contexts, or, in southern Australia, on the few elderly speakers who retain competence in these languages. While this work has contributed greatly to an academic understanding of the nature of human languages, much applied work has also been carried out in remote Aboriginal contexts in bilingual education and Bible translation. However, in southern Australia there has been little applied linguistic work to date.

The almost complete exclusion from linguistic research of the English-speaking Aboriginal people in southern Australia has had some regrettable results. Firstly, the linguists' concern with non-English Aboriginal languages has supported widespread views, held by linguists, anthropologists and many other Australians, that the viability of Aboriginal people and their distinctive ways depends on such attributes as speaking a 'traditional' language (and singing 'traditional' songs). So, the focus by linguists on 'traditional' languages has supported the general, but, in my view, erroneous, Australian belief that Aboriginal culture and people are 'dying out'.

Secondly, the concentration by linguists on non-English-related Aboriginal languages, in association with their tendency to view language as a phenomenon independent of social interaction, has prevented them from considering tension and conflict between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in rural and urban Australia as due in any way to significant differences in communication. Although both parties in a conversation, negotiation, meeting, or class speak English, they are frequently using language differently. Recent work by sociolinguists such as Gumperz (1982a, 1982b) provides a framework which can account for the fact, which is increasingly obvious in large-scale multi-ethnic societies, that 'speakers may have similar life styles, speak closely related dialects of the same language, and yet regularly fail to communicate' (Gumperz and Gumperz, 1982:13). Put simply, where participants in a conversation do not share culture, many of their expectations, understandings and interpretations of the conversation are not shared. It is not sufficient to have shared grammatical competence -- much of our understanding of what people say depends to a significant extent on features of shared socio-cultural competence.

An ethnographically-based sociolinguistic analysis examines what people say in the context of their social relations and cultural context. It uses the ethnographic study of society as a necessary prerequisite for understanding language. It also assumes that we cannot understand the way people act and cultural systems without understanding language use. The dynamic relationship between what people say and its linguistic and socio-cultural context forms the basis of ethnographically-based sociolinguistics. In this paper I show how this kind of sociolinguistics is a powerful tool for explaining much of what happens in interactions between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.

2. Context is crucial to understanding

In order for language users to communicate effectively we need to know much more than how to construct grammatical sentences. While it has long been a cliche in linguistics that 'meaning depends on context', much linguistic analysis virtually ignores context. Sociolinguistic analysis, on the other hand, holds that the relationship between what people say (or language form) and its interpretation and effect (or language function) depends crucially on aspects of context.

For example, I visit an old school friend and I greet him: 'Good morning, Mr Miller.' To understand what I am saying here requires grammatical competence and an understanding of the referential function of elements of the utterance. But this is not sufficient to know what I mean, what is happening in the interaction between my friend and me, or how the utterance is intended to function. A great deal of contextual social, cultural and specific interpersonal knowledge is needed to understand my greeting. As I greet my old friend, am I joking, trying to create a distance or formality between us, signalling deference, expressing hostility?

An understanding of my utterance requires an understanding of my relationship with my friend, cultural expectations and norms (such as the situations when such a greeting is regarded as distant, formal or appropriately friendly), as well as my moods and intentions. At the same time, my utterance helps to create or change this relationship. My friend's interpretation, and subsequent verbal or other response, further creates our relationship. In this way, what we say to each other, which cannot be divorced from its context, both reflects and creates our social interaction and personal relationship.

I define context as the set of factors associated with an utterance of a linguistic form which affect its interpretation. This includes a wide range of factors which are briefly summarised here (for a fuller discussion see Eades, 1983, ch 2). Linguistic (or verbal) context includes such factors as the speech event of which the utterance is part, the choice of language or style of speaking, the utterances preceding and following, and such prosody conventions as stress, intonation, voice speed. What I call immediate physical context includes details of setting, location, time, activity type (see Levinson, 1979) and topic. The social context covers participants as individuals and the relationships between participants. (Here I draw heavily on the work of Brown and Fraser, 1979.) The 'individual participants' category comprises both the stable features (such as personality, interests and physical appearances) and temporary features (such as moods, emotions and attitudes) of the individual qua individual, and features such as class, ethnicity, age and sex of the individual as a member of a social category. The 'relationship between prticipants' category comprises interpersonal relationships such as liking and knowledge, and the role and category relations such as social power and social status. Finally, extra-situational context consists of what I call 'shared knowledge' -- that is the knowledge and beliefs about the world which prticipants in conversations share or assume one another to share and which are necessary (but not necessarily sufficient) for speakers to interpret conversation. This shared knowledge can be restricted to the relationship between two people or can be knowledge within a small group or within a wide socio-cultural group. Our understanding of what people say depends on all these features of context. Clearly, different features will be more crucial than others in different situations. The sociolinguistic analysis focuses on the most significant features affecting the verbal interaction being studied.

In this paper I look briefly at one small area of language use among Aboriginal people in southern Australia -- the use of language to talk about one's own future actions. Firstly (in section 3), I introduce contemporary southern Aboriginal culture. In section 4, I focus on distinctively Aboriginal notions of time, the predictability and control of the future, and the structure of social relations. These socio-cultural features of shared knowledge are the most crucial aspects of context in the understanding of Aboriginal talk about one's future actions. Then, in section 5, we see that both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people use identical grammatical forms in speaking about the future, but meanings are not shared. An understanding of this difference in meaning provides an important explanation of one significant area of cross-cultural tension and misunderstanding. As linguists working in Aboriginal contexts, we are led to ask how many other areas of such tension and misunderstanding can be explained by similar ethnographically-based sociolinguistic analysis.

3. Aboriginal culture in southern Australia

Like the majority of other non-Aboriginal Australians, linguists have frequently failed to see the continuities of Aboriginal culture in southern Australia. Because these Aboriginal people appear to live quite like whites, there is a widespread general misunderstanding of the extent of their distinctively Aboriginal social organisation and culture. There is a general misconception that 'Aborigines on the white side of the rolling frontier lack culture, have no distinctive culture, have only some truncated version of European culture, or have only a culture of poverty' (Langton, 1981:17).

While we are looking in southern Australia for corroborees, 'traditional' Aboriginal languages, sacred stories and carved artefacts, we will find it very hard to see Aboriginal culture. But if we understand culture to be about the way people perceive the world, act on it and relate to others, then we can see in southern Australia today much evidence of Aboriginal culture which reflects both a continuity from pre-contact times and a viable adaptation to the dramatic changes it has faced in the last 200 years. We can cite here briefly such factors as the obligations of a wide range of kin, attitudes to old people, child-rearing practices, attitudes to alcoholics, and ways of participation in Christian churches. (For a discussion of these matters see Eades, 1983:ch 4).

In this paper I focus on one area of contemporary southern Aboriginal culture and social action -- how people talk about their future action. In order to understand what people mean when they talk about the future, we need first to look at Aboriginal views of time, and the extent to which the future can be predicted or effected.

4. Time and the future

Aboriginal people operate with different notions of time from whites. In pre-contact times, the passing of time was marked by seasonal, geographical and social events. Chronological, seriated time marking and reference were not used. The Aboriginal way of viewing time persists today, so that, for example, people talk about events which happened...

...'when Johnny was as big as this little one now.'
...'in the winter time.'
...'last time Auntie Daisy was in town.'

or less specifically,

...'a long time ago.'

Similarly, while many people now wear watches and have to use clock and calendar time within the mainstream Australian society, within their own Aboriginal in-group, future time reference is frequently either vague or tied to some seasonal or social event, such as:

...'when it's a bit cooler.'

or ...'after Billy comes home.'

Aboriginal people today are not much concerned with or interested in the measurement of time (e.g. by clocks and calendars), nor with regulating their lives by such. Within Aboriginal society there is no such concept as punctuality, and while Aboriginal people widely recognise this as a significant element in white society, they frequently ignore it in their dealings with whites. Thus, although there is widespread stereotype among non-Aboriginal people of 'Aboriginal time' as implying 'always late', Aboriginal people are, in fact, sometimes very early for spcific white events such as a doctor's appointment or Church service.

Most Aboriginal people, even in southern capital cities, are not embedded in the system of wage labour (Aboriginal unemployment in southern Australia is estimated to be over 50 per cent by Altman and Nieuwenhuysen, 1979:125). And further, Aboriginal people typically do not share the work ethic. They work for economic survival where necessary, and to achieve social and political goals. There is still within many Aboriginal families a relaxed, unscheduled approach to time and the feeling that what doesn't happen today will happen some other day. The highest values are placed on social and political relations, rather than for example, achieved status. Spending time with one's relatives is possibly the highest priority in Aboriginal life.

To understand the way Aboriginal people talk about future action, we need to understand the Aboriginal perspective on the predictability and control of the physical and social world. While not wishing to reproduce the stereotype of 'the-noble-savage-in-harmony-with-nature', I nevertheless claim that the Aboriginal world view differs significantly from the white world view, in that the former sees much of the world as unchangeable. Aboriginal scholars Eric Willmot, Michael Williams and Steve Albert[3] all contrast the European view of the physical world which needs to be conquered, constantly controlled and modified, with the Aboriginal view which acknowledges that man has no power or need to drastically control or modify it. In the European ethic, man is master of the world and our science is constantly proving this, with technology in exponentially increasing power. In the Aboriginal ethic, the world was made by Ancestral Beings whose spirits must not be disturbed by changing the physical world. Not only is this world uncontrollable, but many aspects of the changing world are to a large extent unpredictable in Aboriginal society (such as the availability of specific resources).

Similarly, in the Aboriginal social world much of what happens can be neither predicted nor controlled. People's activities are not organised by schedules, and furthermore, the society is not stratified or hierarchical. It can be argued that there are no permanent structural positions of authority in Aboriginal society (see Sansom, 1980). Hamilton's (1981) study of traditional Aboriginal child-rearing shows how babies and young children are rarely subjected to routines, controlled or disciplined. It is only when children reach puberty that they are disciplined at all and expected to accept considerable social restrictions (such as the lack of personal choice in marriage partner). But, aside from such formally fixed prohibitions and restrictions in traditional contexts, Aboriginal society, even in southern Australia, has a very individualistic character, in which people, including children, are considered to be responsible for their own actions. This is seen clearly, for example, in the way alcoholics are treated in Aboriginal society. While people express disapproval of alcoholism, at the same time they laugh at drinkers' jokes, pass them another bottle, look after them when they are sick, and frequently make no efforts to change their drinking habit. People complain, but they still fully accept the drinkers, acknowledging that they are their own masters and in control of their own actions. Aboriginal people consider themselves to be responsible for their own actions and cannot control or predict with certainty the actions of others.

5. An example

In talking about their own future actions, Aboriginal people in southeastQueensland[4] use verb forms which appear to be Standard English forms, e.g.

> 'I'll come and see you tomorrow.'
> 'I want to come and see you tomorrow.'
> 'They're going to the football.'
> 'I might go and see him.'

In Eades (1983:ch 7), I analyse the verbal auxiliaries used by southeastQueensland Aboriginal people to talk about the future. In this paper I look at one of these verbal auxiliaries -- **will** -- and illustrate it with one **example**. Interested readers are referred to the thesis chapter for a discussion of **will**, **gonna**, **might**, **wanna** and the present tense to talk about future action.

The following conversation is typical of interaction between two Aboriginal people:

> Fred: Auntie May and Jimmy are coming to town tomorrow.
>
> Kate: Yeah? They gonna stay at your place?[5]
>
> Fred: Yeah. They gonna stay for a few days.
>
> Kate: OK. I'll come over tomorrow.

Non-Aboriginal observers could well expect that they have unerstood this conversation. Fred is telling Kate about two relatives coming to town and staying at his place. Kate decides to come and see them the following day. What is generally not known by non-Aboriginal people is that Kate's 'I'll come over tomorrow' means something like, 'At the moment I intend to come over tomorrow, and if nothing better happens or no-one else turns up, then I will.'

My analysis of the future auxiliaries used by Aboriginal people in southeastQueensland shows that **will** is used of prediction about the future. which is always conditional. It is as if it includes an unspoken conditional clause, 'if nothing else happens.' It is primarily used with a first person ('I') as agent, because Aboriginal people can rarely make predictions about others. This is in marked contrast to white society, where such factors as the scheduled nature of our lifestyle related to the demands of wage labour society, as well as many authority structures, frequently enable a person to make a well based prediction about another's future action, for example an employer or teacher.

The less definite form for prediction of future action is **gonna**, which is usually used for non-first person agents ('you', 'he', etc.), because a speaker can be less certain about the future actions of others than his own. It is also used where future action is posited in a question.

Although Kate's utterance above is a prediction about her own future action, it does not in any way commit her to carry out the future action, or to apologise or explain if she does not. However, a similar conversation between white Australian speakers would produce the expectation that if the speaker does not carry out the future action of the **will**-statement, then she would, at some stage, provide some apology, excuse or explanation.

The difference just described may seem trivial at first glance. Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal speakers are using the same forms, to mean **more or less** the same thing. But in fact, the difference is very significant. Aboriginal people are widely regarded throughout Australia as unreliable with regard to events in the future. One of the most common criticisms of Aboriginal political movements by sympathetic (as well as opposing) whites is that Aboriginal people cannot make plans and cannot organise for future events. Whites also frequently complain of Aboriginal unreliability in keeping to earlier arrangements and commitments. We see this in social workers, employers, school teachers, as well as white people who interact with Aboriginal people as friends, rather than in these service roles.

We form judgments about people largely from their actions. And speaking is one of the most important actions in all societies. (So for example, my greeting of my old friend as 'Mr Miller' could lead him to judge me as being unfriendly.) When an Aboriginal speaker says 'I'll come and see you tomorrow', a non-Aboriginal acquaintance could well judge him as unreliable if he does not turn up and furthermore gives no apology or explanation that day, or later, at the next meeting. But the person was not in fact making a strong commitment. Repeated examples of this kind of misunderstanding over two centuries throughout southern Australia could well be a major reason for the non-Aboriginal view of Aboriginal people as unreliable. Although there is grammatical identity (in southeast Queensland, at least) in the way in which Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal speakers talk about their own future actions, an understanding of what these utterances mean shows significant differences in attitudes and assumptions. An understanding of what speakers are saying requires an understanding of their conventional expectations and interpretations. This involves an understanding of the socio-cultural context, which here includes notions of time and degrees of specificity of time, and the extent to which the future of both the physical and social world can be predicted.

7. Conclusion

An ethnographically-based sociolinguistics, as outlined and briefly illustrated above, could be a powerful tool in Australia in the next 20 years at least. Cross-cultural communication between English-speaking Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people is intensifying, not only in informal social settings, but in political, government, educational and judicial arenas. While many Aboriginal people are competent bilingually and biculturally, many choose to maintain Aboriginal ways of speaking and relating. While distinctively Aboriginal ways are maintained, and non-Aboriginal people are unaware that English is used in

Aboriginal ways, there is considerable communication clash and inter-racial tension. There is much work to be done by sensitive sociolinguists to document, analyse and explain cultural differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and the way this affects our understanding of what people say.

Notes

1. I use the term 'Standard English' to refer to the kind of English which is taught in schools, and used in the media, and which provides norms for correction.

2. I use the term 'traditional' to refer to languages which are clearly closely related to languages spoken in pre-contact Aboriginal societies. However, it should be pointed out that it is incorrect to assume that English-based Aboriginal language does not show much continuity from pre-contact Aboriginal languages. In this way, these English-based Aboriginal languages can be seen also as 'traditional'.

3. The views of these scholars on Aboriginal philosophy and world view were presented in the first Aboriginal history course at Macquarie University 1982.

4. Although this example is drawn from my work with Aboriginal people in southeastQueensland, it appears at this stage to typify language use in a wide range of southern Australian Aboriginal contexts.

5. Note the Aboriginal style of question, discussed in Eades (1982).

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LINGUISTICS AND LAND RIGHTS IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

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Introduction

This paper surveys the various points at which linguistically informed judgments bear on issues in the operation of the land rights legislation in the NT.

The operation of the **Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act** 1976 has involved a lot of talk about Aboriginal land in Australia's Northern Territory (NT). The term 'traditional owner', defined in the **Act**, has become a common expression. It refers to an Aboriginal person as owner of land according to Aboriginal tradition. The **Act** uses the term in the context of a traditional land claim, the running of a land council, or the composition and affairs of an Aboriginal land trust. The concept is also relevant to complementary NT laws, such as those about sacred sites and sacred objects. An alternate term, common in the Top End of the NT, is 'custodian'.

The public face of land rights is the traditional land claim hearings before the Aboriginal Land Commissioner. But the land councils and the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Authority have wider responsibilities which continually involve consultation about land use and land tenure, a role which will continue beyond the current period of land claim hearings.

A typical traditional land claim

Consider first the steps in the preparation of a typical land claim. (See also Maddock 1983:82-105, and the formal statement in the Practice Directions issued by the Aboriginal Land Commissioner and appended to his 1979 Annual Report.)

An initial Notice of Claim is submitted to the Aboriginal Land Commissioner for a particular area of land[2] after minimal research on traditional ownership. Then the relevant land council undertakes research which will enable it to present the required evidence before the Aboriginal Land Commissioner. This typically involves several years of sporadic consultation with the traditional owners. When the research is compiled in the form of a 'claim book', the land council submits the claim book and requests a particular date for a hearing with the Aboriginal Land Commissioner. The claim book is the pivotal exhibit at the subsequent hearing. At least in the Central Land Council (CLC) region, the name assigned to the land claim derives from the name of the principal languages known by the claimants.

Then the Aboriginal Land Commissioner issues notices of hearing (just in English) and the hearing proceeds, in two distinct phases (sometimes recurrent): Aboriginal evidence on the one hand, and 'expert' testimony, objectors' submissions (if any), and summary addresses on the other. After consideration the Aboriginal Land Commissioner reports to the federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, who tables it, and the report is duly published. After his Department has advised him on the report's recommendations (and excepting any legal impediments such as a challenge in the High Court), the Minister decides whether or how much of the land claimed is to be granted, as Aboriginal Freehold title. Assuming the claim is at least in part successful, the relevant land council once again consults with the traditional owners about an Aboriginal Land Trust to hold the title. (If it is not successful the land council still contacts the claimants to communicate the decision and seek advice on what to do next.)

For a list of NT land claims see the Commissioner's Annual Reports (listed with sketch map by Hiatt ed. 1984:4-5,7), or Peterson ed. 1981:46-52.

Translating and interpreting

The first language of many Aborigines involved in land council consultation has not been English, the language of the advisors and the public hearings, and so there has been a constant need for interpretation and translation. This remains true even when the claimants make use of Aboriginal English or Kriol, for this language, especially as spoken by older Aborigines, has numerous differences from Australian English. Harold Koch (1984) has made a case study of the differences which surfaced during the hearing of the Kaytej-Warlpiri land claim.

Of course, in any of their negotations with outsiders Aborigines have had to transcend the language barrier. In particular, in their contact with government agencies or Anglo-Australian legal institutions, Aborigines have had to wrestle with various western concepts and distinctions. A novelty in negotiations over traditional land is that in this domain the Aboriginal languages which are richer than English in conceptual and terminological elaboration. Thus it is English which has had to wrestle with extending its expressive power (see below).

The kind and extent of interpreting and translation subsequently used in the process of each traditional land claim has been largely at the discretion of the staff of the land council involved. The language of Australian courts is

English, and so it is with traditional land claim hearings. The Commissioner has felt that 'generally speaking, there is no reason why witnesses who are able to speak English with understanding and some confidence should not do so' (Willowra Report 1980 para 94 p15). Furthermore, the Transcript of Proceedings records only the English part of what was said, including of course any English interpretation of vernacular statements. (A recent adaptation has been to indicate when claimants were discussing among themselves 'in Aboriginal language' before answering a question.)

When claimants use English as a second language, other problems arise, as the the Aboriginal Land Commissioner himself has noted:

> One has to be careful about attaching too much importance to particular words used by Aboriginal witnesses when those words are no more than rough translations of Aboriginal terms having no precise counterpart in the English language (1980 Utopia Report para 136 p19).

A pervasive example is the words expressing types of ownership, such as 'owner', 'boss' and so on. I return below to the problems of interpreting terms which pose such difficulties.

There is, I believe, another factor promoting the use of English rather than the claimants' own languages in a land claim hearing. The land claim hearing is quite like a court, despite a number of sensible concessions the Aboriginal Land Commission has made. It is primarily a 'whitefella' context, and as such provides the sociolinguistic cues for the use of English rather than another language (cf Nash 1979, Neate 1981, Morphy and Morphy 1984:62).

In practice, the degree of interpreting has varied according to the claimants' ease with English, the ease of their interlocutors with the claimants' English, and the availability of interpreters.[3] It is noticeable that the kind of interpreting in claim hearings has been more formal than had been used often by the same inquirers during the preparation of the claim. During a hearing the interpreter is called on (sometimes under oath or affirmation, sometimes not) to be an impartial mouthpiece, simply casting what is said into another language. Yet during any other process of consultation, an interpreter is often the main facilitator, offering his or her own answers to questions or explanations of misunderstandings. At the hearing, the claimants find they must adjust to the interpreter's not participating in the manner they are used to. This is just one aspect of interpreting for Aboriginal languages that makes the task different than for the more populous languages of the world

For instance, a Spanish interpreter, say, in Sydney is usually unknown to his or clients, while a speaker of an Aboriginal language is usually known, if only indirectly, to all the other speakers. Furthermore, the interpreter is usually incorporated into the claimants' extended family, with certain consequences for the terminology used. For instance the English expression 'your father' has four distinct translations in Warlpiri and related languages depending on the speaker's relationship to the addressee, and the interpreter would supply the term relevant to his or her own relationship. (Usually the questioner being interpreted is a lawyer or the Commissioner, who would not be incorporated to any degree into the claimants' kinship network.)

There has been a feeling that impartiality is served by employing an interpreter who is not a claimant, or closely related to the claimants. Similarly, a person not involved in the preparation of the claim is preferred. In practice this has favoured the use of a non-Aboriginal native speaker of English who speaks the Aboriginal language as a second language. However, the Commissioner has been ready to use Aboriginal interpreters, even claimants. (With respect to the Mudbura claim to Top Springs Yingawunarri, one of the claim-book authors, P McConvell, was the only existing non-Aboriginal interpreter of the language.)

Ideally, only experienced registered interpreters would be used. Increasingly more qualified individuals are becoming available for Australian languages, for example through IAD and SAL courses, which have gained NAATI recognition. Even so, there is still a shortage of their graduates, particularly those who have specialised in court interpreting.

History of interpreting in land claims

The need for interpretation was recognised from the beginnings of land claim hearings. In 1977 a finding under s11(2) of the **Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act** 1976 was made by the Ranger Uranium Environmental Inquiry (Mr Justice Fox presiding). It was the first recommendation made under that **Act**.

> The Commission was concerned to establish the degree to which traditional spiritual affiliation to various sites was still meaningful to the Aboriginal peoiple and to what extent the indigenous religion of the people was still considered important by them. This is a difficult enough matter to determine with white people. With Aboriginal people problems of communication make it more difficult. We did not attempt to examine most of the claimants ourselves in relation to such matters. Aboriginal people did however give evidence before us, some with the assistance of an interpreter or linguist (2nd Report, 1977:266).

The first Aboriginal Land Commissioner (Mr Justice Toohey) distributed in 1977 a tape recording explaining about his duties, and in particular a call for the submission of traditional land claims. It augured well that he ensured that 'through Dr R D Zorc of the School of Australian Linguistics the tape was translated into a variety of languages and distributed among Aboriginal communities' (1978 Report para 6 p2 and Appendix 1). Every community received a tape in English and Kriol. Some of the more populous languages of the NT were used on the appropriate tapes: Gumatj (Yuulngu Matha), Warlpiri, Gurindji, Maung, Burarra, Murrinhpatha, Pintupi, Aranda (Arrernte), Garawa. Presumably lack of resources prevented the inclusion of other languages which have subsequently been a major language of one or more groups of claimants: Pitjantjatjara, Warumungu, Mudbura, Alyawarra.

Interpreters have been listed only in a few of the Aboriginal Land Commissioner's Reports:

1979 Warlpiri Report para 21 p3
    Mary Laughren (also transcribed video tapes)
1980 Uluru Report p39
    Reverend J Downing
    Mr P Eckert
    Mr D A Vachon
1980 Utopia Report p53
    David Long Jupurrula
    Margy Peterson

The last two interpreters listed are Aboriginal, while the others are not. The Commissioner has not listed interpreters in his Reports since 1980.

Each of the eight claims involving Warlpiri claimants has had a Warlpiri interpreter provided at the hearing by the Central Land Council, but the number of other languages 'in the air' at those hearings (Gurindji, Mudbura, Warumungu, Warlmanpa, Anmatyerre, Kukatja) have generally been interpreted ad hoc, usually by claimants, if at all. In the April 1980 claim to Willowra Pastoral Lease, K Hale interpreted Warlpiri, and in the neighbouring June 1982 claim to Mt Barkly Pastoral Lease D Nash interpreted Warlpiri, but in both those hearings the Anmatyerre was not given the same prominence. In the November 1980 Warlmanpa, Warlpiri, Mudbura and Warumungu claim S Swartz was hired by the Central Land Council to interpret Warlpiri and during the hearing the Commissioner also heard interpretation of women's evidence from a Warlpiri woman claimant (Alice Napurrula Nelson). No evidence was taken in Warlmanpa, Mudbura or Warumungu (and the odd term from those languages that came up was explained by the claim book author). Similarly, in the 1981 Kaytej-Warlpiri claim, Mary Laughren was hired as Warlpiri interpreter, and no evidence was taken in the Kaytej language (but one of the claim book authors H Koch explained some terms in that language as they came up). For the July 1982 Ngardi-Warlpiri-Kukatja claim hearing, the Central Land Council hired Aboriginals to interpret Warlpiri (H Nelson Jakamarra) and Kukatja, and a lot of the evidence was taken in those languages.

A couple of times women in mourning have given evidence in sign language, which has first been interpreted into spoken language by an Aboriginal woman.

Traditional land claim evidence

Culturally-based terminology

Linguists and anthropologists familiar with an Australian language have at times given evidence in a land claim hearing as to the meaning of particular terms. Terms calling for this attention have been those that do not have a direct English equivalent, and which are relevant to traditional land tenure. Usually the term, while not necessarily polysemous, has two or more English translations, and this has to be explained to the hearing. Effectively, the 'expert witness' is testifying about linguistic evidence for world-view.[5] Evidence has not gone into, say, the especially Aboriginal semantic structures, including their revelation in special vocabularies, sign language.

Terms that have been the subject of inquiry before the Commissioner include, for Warlpiri:

jukurrpa 'Dreaming'
ngurra 'home, camp, site, country'
pirlirrpa 'spirit' (**bilirba** Meggitt 1962:192.206-7)
kurdungurlu '"managers"' (Nash 1982, Morphy and Morphy 1984)
various kinship terms.

It may be of interest to elaborate some of the discussion these terms have engendered:

The example of the term **ngurra** is quite widespread. In the claim to an area near Ayers Rock (by Pitjantjatjara speakers)', three senses of the term were distinguished:

(a) ngura pulka ...	[lit. 'country big']
(b) ngura inmanguru = estate	[lit. 'country song-from']
(c) ngura kaputu = range	[lit. 'country ']

(1980 Uluru Report para 22 p4)

The term **kurdungurlu**, and its northern equivalent **jungkayi**, have been the subject of much testimony in land claim hearings. In effect, there has been a need for language engineering in English to handle this concept. When extension of English terms such as 'manager', 'policeman', 'worker' and so on proved inadequate, the vernacular terms themselves were borrowed, and eventually 'kurdungurlu' came smoothly off the tongues of city lawyers (see Maddock 1983:97-102). Here is a summary of testimony about the concept in one hearing:

> Mrs Morphy, a linguist, said that the words djunggayi and mingirringgi have a very general distribution through the region and it is not possible to say from which language they originated. They have however been adopted as part of the Ngalakan language. The claim book reads: 'Mingirringgi is usually translated as "owners" and djunggayi as "managers" (Exhibit 5, p33).' However, Mrs Morphy agreed that these English words were as much a matter of interpretation as translation. She expressed a preference for avoiding terms like 'owners' and 'managers' and merely giving a description in terms of the roles that people play towards land. She was not aware of any attempt to trace the etymology of the words, saying that they are words for which there are 'absolutely no direct equivalents in the English language' (1982 Yutpundji-Djindiwirritj (Roper Bar) Report para 54 p10).

The Aboriginal Land Commissioner had earlier commented:

> Some of the linguistic difficulties that arose during the Utopia claim were met in this [Willowra] hearing by the interprettion of Dr K Hale, who spoke Warlpiri fluently and who was able to offer an interpretation of words bearing no simple meaning but requiring an understanding of concepts... my understanding of the use of conceptual terms such as kirda and kurdungurlu was, I think, assisted by Dr Hale's capacity to interpret and explain the concepts involved (1980 Willowra report para 94 p15).

In respect of this, Morphy and Morphy (1984:66) claim that 'even where a linguist fluent in the Aboriginal language is employed as an interpreter, there is plenty of room for Aboriginal evidence to be interpreted through the process of translation to fit the case being presented by one of the parties to the claim'. They cite only Hale's commentary on the Warlpiri term **jurdalja**.[6]

Kin terms for grandparents often arise in claimants' discussion of the sources of their land, and of their life histories. Usually second-generation terms do not distinguish between male and female referents, so for instance Warlpiri **jaja** can refer to 'mother's mother's brother' as well as 'mother's mother' and 'mother's mother's sister'. In Aboriginal English, the term 'granny' would have the same possible range of reference. Similarly, Aboriginal English kinship terms **aunt**, **uncle**, **cousin** are misleading to someone who knows just standard English.

Generally, an interpreter avoids laboriously explicating the lack of congruence between the kinship terminologies of English and the languages of the claimants, but it may be necessary if confusion arises. This has been the case with terms directly relating to land ownership: 'owner', 'manager', 'to own land', 'to hold country' (see Myers and Clark 1983), and so on.

Terms in English have also been the subject of attention in evidence before the Aboriginal Land Commissioner, especially the content of the Act's definition of a traditional owner. Lawyers are used to handling such debate, but at least once advice was sought from a linguist (Dr Tryon in the Finniss River Report 1981 para 61).

Linguistic prehistory

Studies such as O'Grady 1959, von Brandenstein 1982 and McConvell (in press) are the few examples of linguistic prehistory studies for Australia.[7]

Evidence from linguistic prehistory has been little used in land claims. Probably this is because the antiquity of Aboriginal occupation of the land under claim has not been seriously challenged. The general point that the variety of the claimants' languages bespeaks centuries of differentiation met with the approval of the Aboriginal Land Commissioner (1982:11, para 49) ('Warlmanpa Report') quoting Nash 1980:27), but was not subject to much scrutiny.

Related to the long period of time that Aboriginal languages have been spoken in a given area is the degree of elaboration of various semantic domains related to that area. It is a commonplace that Australian languages have large flora and fauna vocabularies. In addition the terminology is specialised -- in comparison to the English terms for Australian flora and fauna, the vernacular terms are noticeably more monomorphemic. The observation may be extended beyond the flora-fauna to domains such as topography and weather.

The study of the etymology of place names is especially difficult in Aboriginal Australia, as it leads directly to songs and the content of Dreamings (Merlan 1982). The assignment of a place name to a particular language, where this may be done, does not always imply that the place is, or was, within the land of speakers of that language, which raises in turn the problems in equating linguistic group and land-holding group (Sutton 1978, 1984, Merlan 1981, 1984). There are instances where a place name shows morphological features of an earlier stage of a language, from which one may suppose that speakers of that language have been in the environs of the place from before the time of the morphological change.[8]

General consultation involving Aboriginal land

Even if most traditional land claim hearings are completed this decade, consultation with traditional owners of Aboriginal land will not cease. Here are three areas in which consultation is open-ended:

1. The need for protection of special places (the work of the Aboriginal Sacred Sites Authority as well as the Land Councils), and concern for custody of sacred objects;

2. The requirement imposed by the Act that Land Councils keep a current register of traditional owners for Aboriginal Freehold land (though Toohey 1984 has recommended changes to this requirement);

3. Negotiations about land use proposals, such as mining, roads and railways, conservation, tourism, military exercises or other ventures.

The fact that such consultations and negotiations are now part of the scene follows from the fact that some NT Aboriginals have through the Land Rights Act regained real control over their land. The remaining challenge is for Aboriginal land-owners to be seen to have real control over the negotiations and their consulting experts as well.

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Notes

1. There are currently three Land Councils in the NT. The Tiwi Land Council comprises Bathurst and Melville Islands, and has no need to conduct land claims. The remainder of the NT is split between the Northern Land Council (NLC) and the Central Land Council (CLC).

2. To be claimable, land must be outside a town boundary, and be unalienated crown land or land whose interests are held entirely by Aborigines such as an Aboriginal cattle station.

3 There has rarely been interpreting of witnesses in claims brought in the Northern Land Council area, as the first language of witnesses there has usually been English or Kriol. The instances of interpreting of which I am aware comprise one witness in the Finniss River claim, and some in the Mudbura claim.

4. NAATI is the National Association for Accreditation of Translators and Interpreters, with headquarters in Canberra. The Insititute for Aboriginal Development (IAD) runs an Interpreter Training Program in Alice Springs, accredited to Level 2 for Arrarnte (Arunta), Pitjantjatjara, Warlpiri and, in 1984, Warumungu (Warramunga). The School of Australian Linguistics (SAL) has acredited translating and interpreting courses at Batchelor, of which the graduates are mostly Top End or interstate, mostly representing languages of areas not subject to land claims.

5. An example is the evidence of Hale in the Willowra claim (summarised in Hale 1980) of Aboriginal propensity for binary oppositions. (Hale's evidence has been partially discounted by Maddock 1983, Morphy and Morphy 1984:61.)

6. The simplest English gloss for the term **jurdalja** (rendered 'tudalka' in the transcript) is 'in-laws', and Hale refers to the 'affinal' content of the term in his commentary. A remark more to the point would be that that no-one at the hearing took up this lead and pursued the affinal content of the **kurdungurlu** concept.

7. One wonders what could be done along the lines of Friedrich (1970), albeit without the additional dimension of recorded history.

8 I do not know if such evidence has been adduced in a land claim hearing. An example is the name for several Warlpiri places Jangankurlangu. The name derives from an earlier form *jangan 'possum' (modern Warlpiri **janganpa**), dating from the time when the postthetic **-pa** was not required before a suffix (such as **-kurlangu** 'belonging to').

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LINGUISTIC CONSIDERATIONS OF LAND TENURE IN WESTERN ARNHEM LAND

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Land Claims have been lodged throughout the Northern Territory since the passage of the **Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act** 1976. The first such claim constituted part of the Fox Inquiry into uranium mining in the Alligator Rivers region and resulted in Stage I of the Kakadu National Park (and inclusive of mining leases) being declared Aboriginal land. Since then the Alligator Rivers Stage II land claim has been held, and there have in addition been numerous investigations into land tenure for establishing Aboriginal owners of land and others with rights in that land, for the purpose of negotiating agreements with mining companies, buffalo-culling enterprises, commercial fishing enterprises and tourist developments. Undoubtedly, however, the greatest impact upon Aboriginal lives in Western Arnhem Land in recent years has come from uranium mining.

Economic developments on Aboriginal land of the sort described above legally require the identification of 'traditional owners' under the **Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act** 1976.

What follows are examples of how linguistics can conribute to a better understanding of land tenure systems,[1] not only for land claims, but for establishing Aboriginal traditional owners for the purpose of recompense for disturbances, or rent or royalty contributions, from enterprises taking place on their land. It would be naive, however, to see the discipline as a major contributor to sorting out a land tenure system. For a better idea as to what transpires at land claims, one should look, for example, at land claim books (produced by the Northern and Central Land Councils), transcripts of land claim hearings, and the Aboriginal Land Commissioner's reports.

Aside from helping to establish a land tenure picture, however, linguistics is also relevant to establishing the type of language being used by a witness, and the meanings one can attribute to his or her statements. For example, one could mention the interchangeable use of English masculine and feminine pronouns, which often tends to confuse the lawyers; attributing special meanings to certain words, such as **cheeky** ('dangerous') and **jealous** ('suspicious'); using intransitive verbs transitively (for example, **growl**, which is equivalent to 'scolding someone') and using parts of speech in ways they are not used in standard Australian English (for example, **jealous** as a verb, **cruel** as a verb) and by deriving new parts of speech (**'worriness'**, for example). (For more information on this aspect see Koch forthcoming.) I do not examine here the use of language in such settings as court procedures to determine land claims --important though that aspect is. Rather, the following is a consideration of a number of matters, linguistic in nature, which elucidate certain aspects of land ownership. Although the matters considered pertain to Western Arnhem Land, the point can be taken that linguistics can elucidate land tenure questions in other areas of Australia also.

Land tenure in Western Arnhem Land

In Western Arnhem Land one of the bases of land tenure is the patrilineal clan. That is, one belongs to the clan of one's father, and owns land he owns and the sites on that land. The clan is known as the **kunmokurrkurr** in Kunwinjku, the lingua franca of the region, but there are similar concepts in neighbouring languages such as Jawoyn (**mowurrwurr**), Gagudju (**nguyu**), Iwaidja (**namanamadj**). Each **kunmokurrkurr** is named, and members of the **kunmokurrkurr** may be referred to by this proper name, with an appropriate prefix (see below). The nature of the clan has been examined by a number of people, including Berndt and Berndt (1970), Keen (1980), and Kesteven and Smith (1983).

The clan is not the only basis for interests in land, although latterly it seems to have been stressed to the exclusion of a number of other rights. One also has rights in the land of one's mother, of her mother, and of one's father's mother; one has rights in the land of one's spouse, of country one was born in, of country one has lived in for a long time, of country one 'knows' (that is, has been educated about, and has legitimate knowledge of), of countries that are linked by dreaming tracks, through 'company relations', through contiguity of country, through ceremonial links, and through common language.

Thus people, areas of land and specific sites, both sacred and non-sacred, are associated with each other in a myriad of ways, which allows for a number of options in the identification of interests in land. The determination of rights in land, especially succession to an extinct clan's land (that is, to the land of a clan that has no surviving members), is usually a lengthy process of negotiation with competing assertions of a variety of claims.

'Language' in Western Arnhem Land

There are a number of languages associated with Western Arnhem Land (see Appendix 1). Some are no longer spoken, others are spoken by small numbers of people, still others (for example, Kunwinjku, Iwaidja, Maung [2]) by very large groups of people.

Country 'has' language. On mapping trips one can ask, 'What language is this country?' and be told 'Amurrak', or 'Amurrak-Iwaidja mixed'. Since it is the clan which owns the land, language affiliation of country may be derived through the clan that owns that land, but factors may be more complicated than this.

Clans may share the same proper name, but own different tracts of land. When such clans share the same language, they are differentiated by the most prominent site in their respective countries; otherwise they are differentiated by language affiliation. Thus we have, for example:

kunmokurrkurr-language

Mirarr Erre

Mirarr Mengerrdji

Mirarr Maiali or Kundjehmi

Mirarr Kunwinjku[3]

Mirarr Gagudju

If one owns land said to be of language x, then that is one's language whether one speaks it or not. Thus Mirarr Mengerrdji people 'own' the Mengerrdji language even though no-one speaks this language any more. Conversely, those who do speak a particular language do not own the land of that language by simple virtue of speaking it. (Otherwise all people in Western Arnhem Land could claim all land on the basis of speaking Kunwinjku and English in common with the last member of a clan.)

Although one can own a language one does not speak, it is thought desirable that one does speak it. Thus, when drunk, a man may claim to speak his now extinct language 'right through', or may insult another by saying 'he not proper x man, he never speak x'. One method of emphasising the importance of one's 'own' language is to recruit scholars to 'write it' and 'make a book'.

Language is used in espousing social connectedness, and hence is also used to mark certain kinds of perceived social boundaries: 'Iwaidja language, that Murran; like a fence, that language', was said by a man who 'owns' the Amurrak language, as he was setting out the limits of territorial boundaries, even though the language he actually speaks is Iwaidja, not Amurrak.

All the principles listed in the introductory section play a part in negotiating a succession to the land of an extinct clan. In particular, close kin, same-name **kunmokurrkurr**, and language play important parts.

The following extract from the transcript of the Alligator Rivers Stage II land claim (pp943-4) shows the complexity of determining a succession:

MR J NAYINGGUL [an Aboriginal man from the East Alligator River area]:

> If say, for one area that gunmugugur [sic] are all gone -- they have all died -- what usually happens is that people next door take over. They will have a meeting first; they have to agree that this group will look after it or sometimes a lingo connection -- understanding each other.
>
> ....
>
> People who speak the same language take over, or same gunmugugur.
>
> ....
>
> If [a woman] is the last one looking after that area and she died and she has no husband, say, or was a widow -- and if she dies having no children of her own -- her sisters will take over, if she has got sisters; but if there is nobody -- as I say, if nobody is living in that area -- those people next door take over.
>
> ....
>
> If she's the owner of that country and she dies, her children -- son or daughter takes over.

MR PARSONS [lawyer]: What relations might take that country if she has no children?

MR NAYINGGUL: All her close gunmugugur or people next door, same language.

All these factors -- kin, clan, language -- are important, but the importance of each relative to the others may differ with the context.

It would appear that if a Kunwinjku clan died out, there would be too many potential claimants on the basis of language. The number of potential claimants are narrowed down by requiring that they are of the same clan name, or have contiguous land. However, if a clan died out of one of the 'rare' languages, similarity of language may be extremely important in determining who is to take over that land.

Thus, in land claims, affiliations of languages can be as important as affiliation to land. Indeed, in some areas, there are said to be no clans, only language groups. This appears to be the situation to the west of the South Alligator River; it is dealt with by Keen (1980:72-3):

> In the west of Claim Area 1, the land owning groups are not clans but language groups. People say that they possess no **kunmokurrkurr**, only languages. Like the clan, a group of people claiming to possess a common language and whose members have common rights to a contiguous area of land including a set of dreaming sites, consists of one or more lineages. The proper name, however, is the name of a language or dialect which the group member ideally speaks. The group and the land is referred to by the language name. Language groups are divided into sub-groups each associated with a particular part of the land.
>
> Language groups are predominantly, but not exclusively patrilineal....Language groups are also predominantly, but not exclusively exogamous.

In some land claims 'language' has been ignored as a relevant category; in others it plays a crucial part. The Jawoyn land claim (Merlan and Rumsey, 1982) was based on a social grouping of people which called itself 'Jawoyn':

> 'Jawoyn' is used by Aboriginal people in the Katherine area to refer both to a language, and to a social group (Merlan and Rumsey, 1982:37).

and Among the Jawoyn, the preeminence of the language-level group as a land-holding unit has as its correlate a tendency for Jawoyn to marry other Jawoyn (Merlan and Rumsey, 1982:39)

and ...we have spoken of the Jawoyn social group identity as a matter of affiliation to territory. This 'affiliation' entails relations of primary spiritual responsibility for sites on Jawoyn land....All Jawoyn people by definition have a socially prescribed responsibility to 'look after' those sites -- a responsibility which exceeds that of any other group vis-a-vis those particular sites (as opposed to sites outside of Jawoyn territory) (Merlan and Rumsey, 1982:39-40).

and Though the essence of Jawoyn social group identity consists in affiliation to Jawoyn territory, membership of the group is established, not by residence per se,

> but by a descent principle: filiation from a Jawoyn parent or parents (Merlan and Rumsey, 1982:40).

These aspects of language ownership and land ownership had been raised earlier in the Malak Malak land claim:

> The linguistic group is the language-owning group, not a language-speaking group....Language affiliation is normally received through patrifiliation -- that is, it is handed on via the father....Language affiliation is not cancelled by failure to learn the language to which one is affiliated (Sutton and Palmer, 1980:30).

Under 'Tribal country', the authors state:

> The linguistic group, although not traditionally the primary land-holding group, is associated with a definable tract of country. A term such as 'Malak Malak country' refers to the sum of those estates held by individual local descent groups who possess the Malak Malak language....Not all Malak Malak lands are contiguous...and in the past some descent groups belonging to other linguistic groups have owned individual sites within the area of Malak Malak estate....But in wider community contexts, the idiom of the linguistic group plays a dominant role in discussions of Aboriginal land ownership in the Daly River region. This is not only the result of the collocation of people from a wide area, but also the result of the extinction of a significant number of local descent groups whose estates have been inherited jointly by other members of the same linguistic group (Sutton and Palmer, 1980:34).

This question of extinction of clans, and a general fusing of a less populous language-owning group with a larger one, which is raised in the land claim book just quoted (Sutton and Palmer, 1980:36), has echoes in the situation in Western Arnhem Land, with respect to the Nabarrkidbarrkid confederacy (mentioned below).

Other connections between land and language are mentioned in the Murranji land claim (Sutton et al., 1983:70) and in the Nicholson River land claim (Trigger, 1982:5).

Historical considerations

A Map of the territories owned by clans in Western Arnhem Land would show that there are tracts of land which are owned by two groups, and also that there are clans bearing the same name which own different tracts of country. How this mosaic arose is not possible to determine from present day informants. What one can observe are current successions to land of clans which have died out, plus discussions by people about clans with few members, and what will happen to their land when they die (a topic usually discussed with circumspection).

There are some written sources which examine the taking over of land in Western Arnhem Land (for example the Fox Inquiry, and Berndt and Berndt, 1970). Other written sources can tell us about land occupation, even if they omit particulars about land ownership. Gagudju people were said to be living at Oenpelli 'in Paddy Cahill's time' (1906-1924). Gagudju people are now said to centre on Cannon Hill, and yet when Warburton was working there in the 1920s, the word he records for 'water' is the Mengerrdji word **okko** ('ogo') and not the Gagudju word **karlu** (Warburton 1934:169). The Mengerrdji people are said to be the 'proper' owners of Oenpelli.

Indeed, although the great majority of people at Oenpelli today are Kunwinjku the word 'Kunwinjku' does not appear at all in Spencer's writings. Spencer visited Oenpelli in 1912. If the situation then was as it is now, with the Murruwan Kunwinjku owning the land adjacent to Oenpelli to the east, this would be most surprising. One could instead surmise that the Kunwinjku have moved into Oenpelli since Spencer's visit. This is in accord with oral information today.

But further, Spencer lists a 'Kulungutchi' tribe in his work (1914:6), and places this tribe on the accompanying map inland on the Goomadeer River. In private correspondence between Cahill and Spencer, there are word lists in Gagudju and in the Kulungutchi language. Those Kulungutchi words all occur in Kunwinjku. One could perhaps say that these two languages are one and the same, but it might be more cautious to say that they have words in common. In particular, all the Kulungutchi words lack noun class markers, but these are the very words that lack noun class markers in Kunwinjku. 'Kulungutchi' might then be the Mengerrdji way of referring to the Kunwinjku. That no-one today recognises the word 'kulungutchi' is not surprising since there is only some passive memory of the Mengerrdji language.[4]

There is also fragmented information on, for example, place names. There is said to be a place called Arrkuluk in the Nabarlek area (there is also an Arrkuluk at Oenpelli). **Arrkuluk** is said to be a Mengerrdji word: so one might suppose that Mengerrdji was once the language of the Nabarlek area, although people are adamant that Nabarlek is Kunwinjku now.

These fragments of information, plus stories about bringing ceremonies into the area from the east, and a story of a 'war' in the Murgenella plains area, when the Iwaidja people recruited the Kunwinjku people to help fight the Gagudju people, who in turn recruited the Jawoyn people to help, all give clues as to demoraphic shifts in the area. Other clues exist in prsonal names.

Names

1. Personal names

An indication of linkages between clans is found in the sharing of prsonal names: in Western Arnhem Land personal names are clan property. When one is born one is given a name from the stocks of names which belong to the clan. A male child is usually given a name belonging to an actual or classificatory father's father; a female child is given that of an actual or classificatory father's father's sister; occasionally a given name is that of a classificatory father, or an actual or classificatory father's sister. Some **kunmokurrkurr** have personal names in common, which might lead one to suppose that these two **kunmokurrkurr** were closely allied at some point and then split (see Kesteven and Smith, 1983). This is certainly a possibility, but it does not appear to be the only one. In Western Arnhem Land the non-Kunwinjku groups to the west are said to be a part of a confederacy known as the Nabarrkidbarrkid. This includes Erre, Mengerrdji, Urningangk, Gagudju, Murumburr, Amurrak and Garik. An Urningangk man says **Nabarrkidbarrkid** means 'people of the swamp areas', but a Kunwinjku woman says it means 'strangers'. The Nabarrkidbarrkid people share names, although the particular language origins of the names are known: 'that one Gagudju name, old man x gave it to him'. Since the numbers of people making up the Nabarrkidbarrkid confederacy have diminished greatly over the last few decades, it may be that they 'gave' names to other groups to ensure the continued use of that name.

2. Dogs' Names

Another link between individuals and land is through the use of dogs' names. Sometimes dogs are given non-Aboriginal names such as 'Whiskey' or 'Boxer' (and even a greyhound called 'Annamaria'), but if they are given an Aboriginal name, it is the name of a site in the country of the dog's owner. Indeed, site names that can be used as dogs' names have intrinsic gender and are designated 'boy dog name' or 'girl dog name'.

Ties to land through women

Ties to land through women are very important, although they have been played down by the way in which land claims have been held: the emphasis has been put on primary ownership to land, which is usually through patrifiliation. Yet links through women are not only important as secondary rights, but play a crucial role in the matter of succession to the land of an extinct clan. That links through women are important in Western Arnhem Land is reflected in the Kunwinjku language.

Kunwinjku is a language with noun prefixes. In very sketchy form these are:

na-	applying basically to male entities
ngal-	applying basically to female entities
man-	applying to plants, but also motor vehicles (including aeroplanes). It occurs in locative form **mi-** (**man-bornde** 'Banyan tree', **mi-bornde** 'under the Banyan tree').
kun-	applying basically to body parts and landscape features, when they stand independently (see examples below). It also occurs in locative form **ku-**, very commonly in placenames.

Not all masculine and feminine nouns take the prefixes **na-** and **ngal-**; however, if they are accompanied by adjectives, the adjective will carry the appropriate noun classifier. Hence:

daluk	ngal-kimuk	
woman	big	'a big woman'
bininj	na-kimuk	
man	big	'a big man'

Some noun roots can take more than one prefix, with concomitant change in meaning:

man-mim	'seed'
kun-mim	'eye'

Some nouns can also be incorporated (see Carroll, 1976:75-8).

kun-kodj	'head'
nga-kodj-babang 1sg head hurt	'I have a headache'

Now, clan names take nominal and pronominal prefixes. Thus:

ngal-Bolmo	'a woman of the Bolmo clan'
na-Bolmo	'a man of the Bolmo clan'

birri-Bolmo	'those (plural) people of the Bolmo clan'
ngane-Bolmo	'we two (exclusive) of the Bolmo clan'

and so on.

Some problems of interpretation are reflected in misunderstood or incorrectly translated terms -- for example, 'the estate or land of clan x' has been purported to be expressed as **kun-x** (for example Altman, 1982:274). However, this is erroneous. **kun-Bolmo** does NOT mean 'land of the Bolmo clan' but 'person whose mother is or was of the Bolmo clan'. While it is easier to say what **kun-Bolmo** does not mean than what it does mean, one might interpret this construction as that person being described as a body part of the Bolmo clan. One can also say 'person whose mother's mother is or was of the Bolmo clan' by use of the kin term **kakkak** 'mother's mother':

kun-Bolmo-kakkak.

There are many parallels between body parts and landscape, which in Western Arnhem Land are carried to the point where congenital skin blemishes are considered in some cases to be **djang** 'dreamings'.

To express 'land of the Bolmo clan' one has to use the root **-bolk-** 'ground':

kun-bolk-Bolmo.

That there are named entities for matrifiliation would seem to support the important status of 'mother country'.[5]

Conclusion

Further studies could be undertaken of semantic fields such as the 'owning' and 'looking after' of land, and 'responsibility': responsibility to others, responsibility for others, for the 'growing up' of children and their socialisation, and responsibility to and for land. Speech pragmatics could also be studied; subtle -- and not so subtle -- power relations are revealed, as is politicking over interests in land.

The elucidation of land tenure systems in Aboriginal Australia clearly merits linguistic consideration: an examination of the notion of 'language' as well as the study of individual languges and the use of language, is relevant.

Notes

1. A plea for linguists to conduct this kind of research is to be found in Williams forthcoming.

2. These three languages have become the lingue franche of the settlements established in Western Arnhem Land: Oenpelli, Minjilang (Croker Island) and Wurruwi (Goulburn Island) respectively.

3. There are two of these, distinguished by country: 'Nimbuwa' and 'Nimbabbirr'.

4. The -tchi of Kulungutchi may be the same as the -dji which occurs in 'Mengerrdji', which has an alternative form 'Mengerr'.

5. This is also brought out in Nash (1982) where he examines the word **kurdungurlu**, and establishes a mother-child link as a pivot for the meaning of this word.

Appendix 1

A brief summary of languages in Western Arnhem Land

Kunwinjku

This is now the language spoken at Oenpelli. The Kunwinjku people started to come into Oenpelli in the early decades of this century.

Iwaidja

This is now the language spoken at Croker Island and the adjacent mainland. It is said to be spoken as far down as Cooper Creek, where Iwaidja-Amurrak become 'mixed'. Work on this language was done as far back as 1846-8 by Father Angelo Confalonieri, a Catholic priest at Port Essington.

Marrgu

The 'proper' language of Croker Island. There is at least one elderly speaker.

Ilgirr

The 'proper' language of Grant Island. There is at least one elderly speaker.

Garik

Said to be the language of the people at the neck of the Cobourg Peninsula. The National Park on the Cobourg Peninsula takes its name from the language. It is included in the Nabarrkibarrkid confederacy by Jacob Nayinggul (pers. comm.).

Kundjeyhmi

This is similar to Kunwinjku, though has been influenced by Jawoyn or Dangbon or both.

Maiali

This is used as a language label, although the exact reference it has depends on the context: sometimes it refers to all 'Kunwinjku' dialects, sometimes it refers to Kundjeyhmi speakers (usually by a speaker of 'proper'

Kunwinjku), and sometimes to those who speak the Beswick variant of Kunwinjku.

Kundangyohmi, **Gunej**, **Kundangpurttjinkabert** [latter cited by Hale in his Kunwinjku transcript]

Dialects of Kunwinjku. No further information.

Gunde?ynekmi

Cited by Harris (1969); said to be a small group allied to Dangbon and situated primarily around Oenpelli.

Jawoyn, Dangbon

Movements of speakers of these languages into the Jabiru region have increased over the past few years.

There are a number of people at Oenpelli who are members of clans which are 'really' Dangbon, or which 'own' this language (for example, Burlarlhdja, Wurrbarn), and others which are Dangbon-Kunwinjku 'mixed'.

Rembarrnga

A community of Rembarrnga speakers has been established at Mudginberri station for some time now.

Gagudju

This is said to be the language of the Cannon Hill area. It was spoken at Oenpelli while Paddy Cahill was there (his lease ran from 1906 to approximately 1924).

There is only one speaker of Gagudju in the Kakadu National Park.

Maung

This is the language now spoken at Goulburn Island.

Mengerrdji

This is said to be the language of Oenpelli itself. There are no speakers remaining.

Erre

This language was said to have been spoken in the region of Cahill's Crossing. The owners of this language were the Mirarr Erre.

Urningangk

This is the language of the Maniiakarr clan (and seemingly others) of Mikginj Valley.

There are no speakers of Urningangk left.

Ambukarla

This language was spoken in the area to the west of Jim Jim Creek.

Amurrak

This is said to be the language of the Cooper Creek area. It is said to be 'like Iwaidja', but although there are some vocabulary similarities, there are also differences.

There is some confusion about the status of Amurrak and Wardadjbak. In the literature (Berndt and Berndt, 1970, for example), these are located in separate places on the map. Jacob Nayinggul (pers. comm.) says they are two different 'tribes'. Charlie Mangulda (pers. comm.) says they are all the same; 'Amurrak' is the name for the language in the language itself. 'Wardadjbak' is the way others referred to them. Big Bill Nayidji also says they are 'the same'.

Wardadjbak - see Amurrak

Manangarri

This is said to be the 'proper' language of Goulburn Island. Nothing further is known of this language.

Wurdilk

Said to be the language of one of the Ulbu clans, and located on the southern bank of the mouth of Murganella Creek.

It is no longer spoken.

Languages which are no longer spoken, and the location of which is uncertain

Angaya	)	These three were mentioned, and said to be 'all gone' by Dolly Yarnmalu, while talking about Gagudju.
Merrekengk	)	
Nangare	)	
Ngardok	-	Language of Point Farewell area, said by Dolly Yarnmalu to be her mother's mother's language.
Bardaya	-	Language of 'Point Stuart way' [information Yellow Charlie Whittaker]

Not included in this list are the number of languages towards Maningrida (Gunbarlang, Gunavidji, Nakara, Kundjirrbara ...), nor those to the west of the Wildman River (Limilingan, Konbudj...).

Appendix 2

A note on the orthography employed

The orthography used in this paper is that developed for the Kunwinjku (Gunwinggu) literacy program. That is:

	Labial	Alveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Stop	b	d	rd	dj	k	h
Nasal	m	n	rn	nj	ng	
Lateral		l	rl			
Rhotic		rr	r			
Glide	w			y		

The alveolar rhotic is a flap; the retroflex rhotic is a glide. The glide denoted by the symbol **w** is labio-velar. Other than **rr**, all doubled consonants are geminates.

i	high front vowel
e	mid front vowel
a	central vowel
u	high back vowel
o	mid back vowel

Although this orthography has been developed specifically for the Kunwinjku language, it has been employed for rendering words in other languages, such as Iwaidja. The exceptions are in language names, which have been spelt as the common practice is to spell them -- for example, 'Jawoyn' and 'Gagudju'.

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TEACHING CREATIVE WRITING TO ABORIGINAL CHILDREN IN URBAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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Successful development of creative writing skills by children depends heavily upon a significant degree of self confidence and a willingness on the part of the children to take risks in their attempts to express themselves through writing. Successful development also requires that the children possess considerable understandings about the writing process itself and the way in which meaning is typically encoded in a wide variety of writing genres.

Some children seem to acquire these things with reasonable competence during the course of their schooling and a few even appear to do so with very little effort indeed. However, on the other side of the blackboard, there are also a large number of children who never seem to penetrate the mystery of 'creative writing'. Included in this latter group is an uncomfortably large percentage of children of Aboriginal descent who attend urban primary schools. Many of these children appear to have difficulty in mastering what are often regarded as basic written expression skills. Teaching such children to write often requires a large input of effort on the part of the teacher and any considerations about creative writing are frequently placed far into the future while attempts are made to concentrate on the 'mechanics' or 'basics' of writing. As a result, the challenges for such children to write creatively in school are reduced and watered down because it is believed that they cannot cope with them and consequently they become locked into a cycle of educational deprivation which, because it limits their exposure to learning opportunities, limits the eventual writing skills they will possess.

Writing is a process not simply a product

A major factor contributing to this problem is the manner in which creative writing is often conceived. 'Creative writing' is frequently seen as a product. A certain piece of writing that expresses, in the teacher's perception, authenticity or originality or effective presentation. Often little thought is given to how a piece of writing becomes 'creative'. Recently, research which has had a profound impact on the teaching of writing in Australian schools (Walshe 1981; Graves 1983) has focused directly on the 'process' of creating writing. When this orientation is taken, it becomes apparent that what is often called creative writing is itself the product or a specific instance of a much broader process which is concerned with the creation of any written text which is not simply copied.

The adoption of a process orientation in the teaching of creative writing has fundamental implications for the teaching of all children. However, the importance of these implications for children from specific socio-cultural groups, who are presently failing in school, is even greater. This is so because a process writing approach holds as its basic premise that children cannot learn to write creatively unless they are encouraged to create writing and it embodies the assertion that all children will do so if the teaching environment of the classroom allows it. Consequently, the principal emphasis of the instructional task facing the teacher in the classroom is focused on how they can encourage children to create writing so that they can show them how to write creatively and effectively.

The solution proposed by Graves is essentially quite simple and direct. He argues that children want to write and asks why we can't let them do so in school and why we can't let them choose what they write about.

Graves points out that very much of what currently passes for teaching writing in schools actually inhibits children's attempts to express themselves through writing and that typically very little time is given in which children have control of their own writing attempts. Graves' position underlines a basic fact about language learning skills in general, namely that children are capable of a high level of self direction in terms of selecting and organising what they need to learn and that if teachers are willing to trust them to do this the children will greatly surprise them. As Haste (1983) reports:

> The problem according to Smith (1981), is that children are always learning and that in trying to teach what we know as language truths, children learn the wrong things. Given the way written language is taught in school, it does not surprise us to find that the most common response to the request 'Write anything you wish to write', is 'I can't spell' (p27).

It is true that children from various socio-cultural environments come to school with differing degrees of skill in meeting the language demands that will be made on them in the classroom. However, the myth that such children come to school with little or deficient language skills per se, has been exploded by researchers such as Shuy (1965), Labov (1970) and De Stefano (1973). This point is underlined strongly in the case of Aboriginal children in urban schools when children who are genuinely bilingual or even trilingual are being taught by monolingual teachers. Aboriginal children, like all children, need to develop further language skills, particularly in order to cope with the written code they will meet in school. Often they may need to develop more written language skills than children from socio-cultural environments that are more closely allied to the cultural context of language use in school. However, it is not logical to infer, as some educators have done, that this somehow means they are not efficient language learners and are not capable of controlling their own language learning.

Trusting children and allowing them conrol over their own learning processes does not mean that the teacher simply stands back and watches them learn without assistance. Graves' concept of process writing in the classroom, in fact, requires teachers to be far more involved and in touch with what and how children are writing than more traditional approaches.

In process writing, the teacher's task is to structure, monitor and organise a classroom context which provides the conditions, support and direction children need in order to apply their natural language learning strategies to the task of learning to write successfully. The teacher must motivate the children to write, discuss their writing attempts with them and show them how to develop their writing through discussion with each other.

Proponents of process writing see writing as a three stage process:

> First, a pre-writing stage which deeply considers a problem; second, a writing stage which produces a fairly rough draft; third, an editing stage, which polishes the draft and finally rewrites it (Walshe, 1979).

This concept of process writing is not meant to represent a rigid, formal process which forces children to rework and rewrite everything they write in the classroom. It is important for the whole concept that children have control over their own use of the stages. The three stage process does provide a model within which teachers can discuss with children what they are going to write and how they are going to write it.

In writing conferences with children, the teacher's role is to help them expand and develop what they wish to say. The teacher achieves this by helping children identify and solve the problems which arise because of discrepancies between their intentions and what they have written.

> For any writer there is always the next question, but questions that temporarily cause discrepancies between intention and what is on the paper. The art of teaching is to ask questions in the midst of a person's

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> competencee (Graves 1983).

In conferencing children about their writing, the teacher depends heavily on the knowledge and the language skills the children bring to the discussion to form a base on which teaching is built. The more the children know of the subject about which they are writing and the more the children understand about language skills required to compose texts the more potential there is for communicating and learning in a writing conference.

A major obstacle for a large number of Aboriginal children and their teachers is that the children usually have had very little prior exposure to the types of experiences with books and written language that primary schools assume and on which they base teaching programs. Therefore, it is important that schools attended by such children should provide an adequate language development program which gives access to the language skills children need to meet the demands placed on them for creative and effective writing by our school system. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that similar comments are also being made by researchers working with process writing for non-Aboriginal children:

> Let me say we're very busy with our process writing. It's terrific to see it happening and indeed Australia is leading the world in the implementation of process writing. I appreciate that the research data that has been generated in California is being utilised throughout Australia. But where do the children's stories come from? from their experience of life. But if you find yourself gritting your teeth through yet another retelling of Dr Who, you're expriencing one of the limitations of process writing (Johnson 1983).

To a certain extent criticisms such as this, especially when considered out of context, appear rather extreme and polemic. Graves (1983) continually asserts the importance of exposing children to literature as part of the process of teaching creative writing. The difficulty seems to lie in differing perceptions of the role literature as a language model for writing should play in the teaching program. Graves seems to accord literature the role of a stimulus for exploration with not as much weight given to literature as a model for language learning.

> Reading different authors aloud also provides different voices and topics for the children to sample. The objective is not to have the child write and illustrate like Robert McCloskey, Beatrix Potter, or Marguerite Henry. Rather, the objective is to enjoy the plots, the fantasies, the taste of words, to be stimulated by the drama of events. The children may try some of the author's forms of expression, ways of illustrating. Fine, but it is their choice (Graves 1983:29).

However, Christie (1983) makes an appropriate comment when she cautions:

> Important though the belief in individuals is, it is often allowed to obscure the fundamental question of how it is children learn to express points of view, or to exercise choices in their writing.

In the light of such comments it is perhaps significant that the research data behind Graves' work is centred on children from middle class homes.

In attempting to develop creative writing skills in Aboriginal children, the question of 'where do the children's storeis come from?' must add an additional dimension to the concept of process writing without, of course, damaging other important concepts such as developing the 'authentic voice of the child' (Thompson 1975-6; Graves 1983).

The language skills competent writers need

It is worthwhile then to ask what we mean when we talk of the language skills children require to develop as writers. One way of describing these language skills comes from the fact that the language knowledge and skills that are involved in writing are determined essentially by the functions that the writing is intended to perform. For example, some writing is intended to be read by others and some writing is personal or private. Within these two broad categorisations a large variety of specific genres and sub-genres can be identified. For example, narrative prose, exposition, reporting, descriptive prose, news reports, poetry, songs, plays, advertisements, notes, scientific articles in specific disciplines etc. However, it is not necessary to expand upon these for the purposes of the present discussion.

When writing is considered in terms of the broad categorisation of public or private it becomes obvious that the overriding function is the communicative (or public) one. Most writing is written to be read by other people and because no two persons' experience and knowledge of the world are identical, communicative writing must draw on structural conventions which are mutually accessible to both writer and reader. These structural conventions can be considered on two dimensions. The first dimension could be termed a mechanical one which is concerned with acceptable levels of presentation, for example, neatness, punctuation, spelling, observation of socially held conventions of 'correct' grammar as opposed to selection of registers which are appropriate to the context of the writing itself. While this dimension is an important one, particularly in relation to certain writing purposes. For example, business letters and employment applications in particular, it has little direct relevance to the process of creating or composing a piece of writing.

The second dimension concerns itself with the manner in which the content of the writing is organised and represented in order to create a coherent unit of meaning which is accessible to the reader. Such units of meaning are best represented by Halliday's (1975) and Halliday and Hasan's (1980) notion of 'text'. This is because the creation of coherent units of meaning in writing requires language skills which are centred on larger 'chunks' of writing than can be represented by words or even sentences. The language skills children require to become efficient writers then, are those concerned with creating the schema and cohesion of texts (Halliday and Hasan 1976; 1980; Anderson 1977; Pearson and Johnson 1978) as well as the sentence structures and lexical items such texts contain. This dimension is directly related to the process of creating any piece of original writing (text) and must be a major language development consideration in the teaching of creative writing in schools.

Of all the different types (genres) of texts which exist within the writing of any cultural group, each has its own particular text conventions which enable readers to generate reasoned predictions which, in turn, allow them to comprehend texts within the genres with which they are familiar.

Text conventions found within different genres are complex and the flexibility and manner in which they are employed varies greatly from one genre to the next. For example, the more a textbook (expository genre) sticks to clearly defined organisational conventions which make its text clearly predictable to the reader the more effective it will be. In fact, research on expository text has revealed that writers characteristically select from a rather limited range of text schema. Moreover, Pearson and Johnson (1978) have shown that readers expect this range of schema and comprehend more effectively when they are used.

Writers working within the conventions of other text genres, for example, novelists, can play with readers' expectations far more than the author of a textbook. As Smith (1982) points out:

> Authors transgress convention in some respects so that the reader cannot anticipate precisely where a book will lead. Globally, it is a convention that some conventions will be observed and others transgressed; all this is part of the contract between writer and reader that makes interaction possible (p99).

Such texts, however, are still carefully structured from text conventions which are mutually held between writers and readers:

> No convention has ever been deliberately invented or imposed upon a genre by an author alone. Authors may devise changes and innovations, they may knowingly or accidentally contravene the conventions of a genre, but to establish a new convention they need the co-operation of readers who will anticipate it (Smith, 1982:100).

In effect:

> The means by which the author manipulates the reader expectations remains the same, but the manner in which manipulation is done can be entirely different (Smith, 1982:99).

When we talk of creative writing that is meant to communicate to others, we are referring not to any piece of writing that may be produced but to writing which is adequate to achieve its communication purpose. Creative writing must sit comfortably within the envelope of 'competent writing'. It must recognise and draw from the text conventions which are specific to its genre.

Private writing, also, is often most effective if the writer employs systematic text organisation, although the system may be idiosyncratic to the writer. However, it is often advantageous for such writing to be based on the text conventions of communicative text, particularly if the writing is of any length. Haste points out that there is a natural tendency which exists, even in children, to impose the text conventions of communicative writing as a means of organising the world in general:

> The importance of this instance of literacy lies in the fact that it clearly demonstrates the notion of text, as well as learning being the search for unsuspected textual harmonies across time. Alison assumed to make sense of the world. The texts she created from a written language encounter served not only as frame-works for subsequent encounters with written language, but also with the world. The lines which we as adults draw between written language texts and whole world texts are arbitrary and both are in fact a play in the text worlds we create from language (Haste 1983:37).

In many cases also, private writing is the first draft in a writing process whose end point is the shaping of a text which employs the organisational conventions of communicative writing. This may be done for the writer's satisfaction even when it is not intended to share the text with others. In effect, a strong case can be made for the importance of an understanding of the text conventions of communicative text genres for the development of competent and flexible private writing skills. It is these second dimension skills which need to be nurtured if Aboriginal children are to develop as competent writers.

How children learn the language skills necessary to create written text

The next step for teachers then, is to ask how children naturally learn such skills. It is clear they do not learn them through drilling language structure or consciously memorising lists of vocabulary. The language skills we are taiking of are concerned with generating complete texts and the central dimension is how the schema and cohesion of those texts is achieved. There is strong evidence that children who are involved with written text through exposure to stories and books at home before they enter school are already beginning to focus on these aspects as a basis for language development. Holdaway (1979) describes how children naturally respond to text by attempting to recreate it globally in terms of the meaning it encodes and in doing so they concentrate on the schema or meaning structure of the text as the starting point.

> Both infants use their own primitive grammatical operations. They have encoded the meanings of the story into a unique structural form They have remembered very little at the surface level: what they have remembered most firmly is the meanings (p44).

The learning of other aspects of text such as syntax and vocabulary flow from such attempts. The children master them as they continuously play and experiment with expressing their meaning schema:

> They are learning how to throw a syntactic rope across the abyss of meaning before they shuttle vocabulary over to the other side -- a sort of flying fox strategy of encoding (Holdaway 1979:52).

Children appear to be naturally predisposed toward repeated and intensive involvement with text which extends to attempts at recreation of specific texts as a basis for learning the language skills associated with written text.

Haste also describes a learning process for the language of written text which supports such a conclusion.

> Theoretically we might say that, when language users are thrust into an unfamiliar context, they take refuge in those past registers which provide the closest fit. To be successful in this new situation, they rely on text-context rules which they have abstracted out of

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> past experience as characterising language use in this setting. Within this frame, what time does is allow language users the opportunity to attend more carefully to and orchestrate aspects of the specific field, mode, and tenor of the situation (Halliday and Hasan 1980) in which they are involved. As constraints naturally evolve and become perceptible, rather than restricting communication as imposed constraints do, they permit expansion of meaning potential (Haste 1983:34).

Brown (1977), reviewing the effect on reading skill development of reading aloud in class, draws the following conclusions:

> ...the weight of evidence suggests that exposure to literature prior to and during the elementary school years has a positive effect on reading achievement, and that this exposure, at least when carried out in schools needs to be for an extended period of time on a regular basis. Reading aloud programs have the greatest impact on children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, where presumably ongoing linguistic experience is different from that found in books (p15).

Elley and Mangubhai (1982) in reviewing the long term effects of a book flood on children's language growth in Fiji also found that exposure to written text needs to be intensive to effect significant development in writing and reading skills. Furthermore, they found that the effect was most marked among Fijian children for whom English was a second language.

The issue of the need for intensive involvement with written text highlights the fact that the context in which children encounter books is crucial. If the teaching program doesn't actively encourage children to love and explore books then it stands to reason that many children, particularly those who have not had intensive and enjoyable experiences at home, will not explore them intensively at school.

As a result, often just reading stories is not enough. Some children will need to be encouraged and shown how to interact with text in a constructive manner. Such children have to experience the benefits they can gain before they will be actively predisposed to seek them out.

A further observation which is allied to the need for intensive involvement with text is made by Christie (1983). She points out that the process of learning to write requires direct involvement of the child in attempting to produce a wide variety of different text to satisfy valid communication needs:

> Development of capacity to write is a matter of learning to write in use, where that involves opportunity to learn to write in a variety of ways, for a variety of purposes. In addition, since the various written forms constitute different ways of making meaning, having distinctive structures of their own, learning to write involves learning to recognise, interpret and construct different overall patterns or structures in writing.

Christie's point -- that these patterns or structures are learnt by children through a process of attempting to construct and communicate meaning via the medium of written text (**Learning how to mean** Halliday 1975) -- is fundamental, for it explains why the process of learning to write cannot be easily short circuited by the provision of formulae for writing texts separate from the process of involving children in the creation of meaningful text itself.

What can be done in the classroom?

In considering the implications which arise for classroom application from the previous discussion, it is useful to make a short examination of the text involvement that Aboriginal children often get in our urban primary schools.

Despite the current emphasis on the value of 'real' books and literature as a basis for teaching reading, the central core of most instructional programs is still the 'basal' reading program. And, despite recent attempts by publishers to dress them up, the majority still contain impoverished text. This is particularly so in the early levels. Furthermore, many schools are still using editions of these programs which were produced over 20 years ago. When children start to fail with such materials, there is also a strong tendency to remediate by increasing the amount of practice time with the same texts rather than questioning the relevance of the texts themselves.

Recently there has been a movement toward using 'read along' or 'big book' materials (Holdaway 1979) as a supplement to reading programs. This has provided a different text genre in classrooms and is a worthwhile and welcome development. However, when these materials are viewed from the point of view of the variety of text structures they provide it is apparent that they are themselves confined to a limited genre by their requirements for repetition, rhythm and rhyme. Furthermore, while some of these materials sit easily as valid examples of literature for children there are others which are as contrived, confusing and pointless as much of the early basal reading materials they are meant to replace.

Another type of book which Aboriginal children, in particular, are subjected to is the sentence pattern reader:

'This is Mala.' (illustration)

'This is Mala's comb.' (illustration)

'It is Mala's.' (illustration)

These books and others like them have no text structure because they possess no cohesion to tie them together as a meaningful piece of writing. They may be useful to teach simple word recognition skills or to teach spelling, however, even then one would have to question whether it wasn't possible to teach such skills from more meaningful texts.

In 'language experience' programs also, children are often confined to writing activities which are limited to providing a sentence for a picture they have drawn. Sometimes even this is dictated to be written down by the teacher. Language 'experiences' often produce 'reportive' texts as well. However, books of this type, e.g. 'Our visit to the pet shop', often do not contain any real schema or cohesive language and end up as a series of isolated sentences:

e.g. 'We went in the bus to the pet shop.

Mrs Brown owned the pet shop.

Peter and Fiona liked the rabbits.

Ernie fell in the feed bin.

The parrot bit Kevin and he cried....'

When we look at the implications that arise from using these types of materials as a basis for developing the language skills necessary to produce competent and creative writers we need to ask two questions:

1. How involved in the text are individual children?

All texts are not immediately perceived by children as meaningful or relevant and, as a result, are difficult for them to explore as language models. We need to ask how we can make the meaning context and language of texts we use accessible to children before we can expect them to become involved.

2. How relevant to the development of the language skills necessary for creating text is that involvement if it occurs?

The important point about materials such as those discussed previously is not so much that they are necessarily damaging in themselves. Often they can be justified as a means of teaching a specific reading objective and even some skills children need for writing. However, we need to distinguish between the development of 'mechanical' skills and those which are involved in the process of creating texts themselves. Furthermore, because many of the materials which are commonly used in schools offer children a limited or distorted exposure to text genres they have the potential to cause serious damage to the development of children's ability to write if these materials come to dominate the curriculum to the point where the daily reading of a library story is the only exposure to 'real' text the chilren encounter.

In order to create language development programs for Aboriginal children (or for that matter, any children) which can provide a valid answer to the question 'Where do the children's stories come from?', we need to recognise that children need to be actively and positively involved in a whole range of different text genres from narration to exposition. It is important also that this involvement extends past simply listening to stories which are read to them to the exploration, creation and recreation of different text genres as part of the process of learning to read and write.

Some of the techniques teachers can use to achieve these ends involve:

1. Basing reading programs on 'real' text which covers a variety of genres from the moment children enter school.

2. Actively modelling the creation of texts by writing for children and by negotiating and writing texts jointly with them.

3. Providing children with a range of different levels of support in the creation of text by negotiating texts from a variety of teaching contexts. From recreating stories which are already well known to both the teacher and the children, to negotiating with small groups and individual children to create original stories. The negotiation process is facilitated by intensive reading and exploration of other texts which fit closely within the genre being negotiated.

4. Ensuring that all children 'belong' to and can identify as their own the stories which are produced. This is achieved by using shared experience, drama and discussion techniques to explore the context, schema and other language related knowledge needed to produce a story before children are asked to write it. Activities of this kind enable groups to subsequently share in the production of the final text because the overall schema is shared by all.

Furthermore, in the actual writing of the negotiated text, it is important to take the time to explore and discuss possibilities and also to explore the mechanics of writing a text. Focus needs to be on the process involved and not simply the end goal of producing a book.

5. Implementing a process writing approach to the chilren's individual writing attempts.

6. Spend time creating stories together orally with children 'just for the fun of it'.

7. Integrating reading and writing programs as much as possible. Texts which are negotiated between the teacher and the child can be used as a basis for 'read along' work to develop semantic cueing strategies and for teaching skill areas such as phonics, word recognition and spelling. Moreover, there is no reason why such an approach can't lead to using library books and instruction texts without the need for basal materials.

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RATIONALE FOR THE LIRP^2 METHOD OF TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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Introduction

The LIRP^2* method has been developed over time in response to the Northern Territory context of Teaching English as a Second Language, particularly to Aboriginal children.[1] While it was developed primarily to meet that situation it would be equally applicable for teaching migrant children. It is a **method** - that is, a systematic and well-reasoned set of procedures for the teacher's guidance in planning the presentation of material and in sequencing the daily language-teaching event.

From whatever-source the teacher selects the language to be taught, the LIRP^2 method suggests a step by step development of the possibilities inherent in the material. For example, the teacher may have decided that the language to be presented will derive from functions. Once the language through which that function is realised has been compiled, and the teacher has identified the situation where that language is most likely to be used, she may then apply the LIRP^2 methodology to draw up daily lesson content. If the source of the language is literature-based, the methodology again provides a plan for presentation of the material. If a teacher is concerned that students are having difficulties using a structure correctly, once the social context has been ientified and the structure built into that, the application of the LIRP^2 again is useful.

As a second language methodology LIRP^2's main emphasis is on the inroduction of NEW material and its 'recycling' until children are thoroughly familiar with the language presented and are able to use it themselves in context. It closely resembles the IODE model devised for first language speakers (Fraenkel, 1973). The following are the IODE and LIRP^2 models:

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*Look, listen; interpret, infer; recall, repeat; practise, produce.

INPUT	(LOOK ((LISTEN
ORGANISE	(INTERPRET ((INFER
DEVELOP	(REACT ((REPEAT
EXPRESS	(PRACTISE ((PRODUCE

First language students (ideally) experience new learning through a language which is thoroughly familiar to them, about concepts which are retrievable from their known environment. Second language students need different emphasis in presentation, and need time to absorb and mentally process the new information. Additionally we suggest that there needs to be opportunity for the children to react to what is being learned, without at first a verbal response. This is in keeping with what we know of first language learning.

The complexity of learning a second language has been the subject of considerable research. In a recent book, Ventriglia (1982:v) states:

> Learning a second language is a complex task. It is not simply a matter of learning a system of rules for linking sounds and meaning; it is a dynamic process of larning to use this system for communication in a second culture.

The context for learning to use the system is the social situation where meaning and purpose coincide. It is amazing that a school-age child can learn a second language almost to the level of native-like competence of a child of his age; within a period of about 18 months, while another child coming into the classroom may take years of teaching and still be far short of native-like competence. Once the learning is 'induced', other factors militate against the learner having the opportunity to achieve anything like native-like competence. When 'learning' involves formal 'teaching' the success rate drops considerably. Our success in teaching a second language may relate directly to our ability to replicate the 'natural' language learning situation. Halliday (1976:6) comments:

> Some people would say that, given that we are in some form of classroom situation, this success is achieved...to the extent that we can make the process of induced language learning resemble that of natural language learning.

Second language learning in the classroom situation then is by its very nature 'contrived'. For a start, the child may not have much use for it outside school so there is not the same high motivation (a significant criterion for the 'good' language learner), of a child learning a language for the first time. In many cases, the use of the first language provides for all the L^2 learner's language needs. Additionally, the teacher-learner ratio is very different: one-to-one (or many-to-one if we include close-knit kin groups) for the first language learner, and one-to-many for the second language teacher-learner relationships of the classroom. Further, whatever means we employ to introduce and develop new language, the situation is still the classroom, which has implications for our ability to introduce a range of realistic language in its most natural context. There is a very worthwhile section by Widdowson, which discusses this in some detail (Widdowson 1978:1-21).

Learning a second language

LOOK/LISTEN

In learning English Aboriginal children learning to speak it as a second language already have two advantages over infants learning English as their first language. The first is that, by the time they come to school having already learned their mother-tongue, they have learned to a high degree what they can accomplish through language.

The second is that they have developed physical maturity and conceptual knowledge consistent with their age and ability, through interaction with significant adults and events in their environment.

They may sometimes be confused when learning the second language because their language behaviour is learned from and based on what is acceptable behaviour in one's own culture; and the interaction of culture and language has shaped the particular world view a person maintains - the way we look at ourselves, the people, things and events around us. However, the cognitive and linguistic immaturity of the listener is not as constraining for the teacher as it is for the mother of an infant just learning to speak.

Before the L^1 child attempts to verbalise (although he is already actively creating his own meanings) he has up to 12 months of listening before any response at all is expected of him. The mother continues to talk to the child with little overt response expected other than a 'listening stance' - face turned more or less in her direction, body position suggesting attention, and perhaps searching eye gaze toward her or some object she may refer to. In such a favourable learning situation, the child has ample time to hear the music of language: its intonation, pitch, rhythm and stress, which assist him in laying down the beginnings of creating meanings in his mother tongue.

Simultaneously, the child is building up his knowledge of social interactions. He is learning the conversational gambit of turntaking: he is beginning to know when to be a speaker and when to be a listener, a very important part of social learning. From all of this we can infer that concentrated listening over an extended time plays a previously unemphasised part in the language learning process.

There is an account of some South American tribes, whose members become plurilingual in each other's languages which they do not have opportunity to hear until they are adolescent. They are given no explicit language instruction and they learn the language by listening.

> ...when the time comes, they are able to listen in to a large amount of speech without being required to participate in the conversation. The success rate appears to be remarkably high (Halliday, 1976:7).

It would appear that, in attempting to teach Aboriginal children English, we could well place greater emphasis on this notion of giving the children time to listen to increasing amounts of language, in social or communicative contexts, as we have seen with first language learners.

Dialogues acted out by two native speakers, audio-visual taped conversations, literature which uses natural language between speakers, all are relevant for listener processing. The L^2 learner needs to hear correct models frequently in order to learn the intonation, stress, and rhythm patterns of the new language, as well as unusual sounds not found in their L^1 and to relate meanings to the flow of language. The learner will need to be highly motivated through dealing with material which is as close to his own interests and intentions as it can be, and which supplies the student with the understandings of his age group which permit meaningful interaction with peers on topics of mutual interest.

The active listening approach to language learning is quite in keeping with Aboriginal learning styles. Aboriginal children learn by imitation and observation; there is little overt (formal) teaching as such, nor are they expected to perform until they feel ready to do so.

The LOOK/LISTEN stage of the LIRP^2 model attempts to incorporate these understandings of the ways in which both first and second language learners approach the task. Halliday (1976:8) comments:

> ...if we take seriously the notion that learning a second language is or ought to be in some respects like learning the first language, then we should take note of what actually goes on when one learns one's first language, one important characteristic of which is that the infant from birth onward can be there and listen without having to produce responses. A baby never has to do what the unfortunate student in the language class has to do, namely spend all his time and mental energy thinking about what he's going to say next, thereby being prevented from ever really listening to what others are saying now.

In the classroom, this stage is where the new language or new concept is introduced for the first time. The teacher will thoughtfully decide whether the material to be inroduced may best be presented through story book or textbook; a puppet play; a taped dialogue or song; acting out of a dialogue with another native speaker; showing a video or a film.

In an article examining criteria identifying 'good' language learners, Rubin (1975) suggests that informed guessing is important. The valid, rational and reasonable inferences which the language learner makes are based on three steps: firstly he mentally 'scans' the information being received, confirms or disconfirms his suppositions and tests for accuracy, all in a moment. Secondly, he assesses the probability of the correctness of the guess. Thirdly he readjusts his supposition, as required, on the basis of later information received.

The importance of guessing, or predicting, has long been recognised in the literature, yet few language courses have given students the time during presentation of the material to allow them to engage in informed guessing.

Another feature of the 'good' language learner is that he pays attention to meaning. The context of speaking, the relationships of the participants and the rules for speaking are all as significant as the grammar, which is the vehicle for the realisation of meaning. Where the child's comprehension of new language lets him down, and where the situation may be ambiguous, he resorts to cue seeking to retrieve the meaning of an utterance. These cues are given all unknowingly to the learner by more advanced speakers, and can be visual, gestural, linguistic and interpersonal. All of these aid the learner in his search for comprehension, but he needs time for the process to be completed.

The **interpreting** referred to here is not the literal translation of vocabulary and structures from one language to another, but rather the effort to bring out the meanings inherent in the material. This may require students to refer to past language/experiences in both languages before they are able to determine the meaning attaching to the new situation and to develop new meanings.

Many language teaching courses move almost immediately from the LOOK/LISTEN to the REPEAT or PRACTISE stage. The procedure places a great strain on the learner, for there are usually insufficient repetitions of the target language/situation for him to pay attention to both the context and the language at the same time. This means that he is unsure of the nature of the situation and has not had time to begin 'bridging' or 'chunking' in the new language. He can usually only begin this bridging by reference back to his knowledge of the world as reflected in his own first language. Furthermore where dialogue is involved, he is busily trying to learn his part off by heart, so cannot attend to the cues the other person is providing.

What is distinctive about the INTERPRET/INFER stage of this model is that it provides the learner with a vital 'breathing space' where he can relate what he is experiencing now to what he is hearing, and to relevant past expriences. It is in effect a pause in proceedings while the student 'gathers his thoughts together'. From the teacher's side it is a 'hands off' step: the teacher provides the opportunity for the children to become increasingly familiar with the material, but does not intervene in the process. In the classroom setting this could involve: leaving the story read to the children or the pictures used to tell the story in the reading corner for them to peruse; leaving a tape of the story for them to listen to in their free time; making available the puppets used in presentation, i.e. left in the play corner etc.

REACT

We have seen how the mother's expectations of the child's responses positively contribute to the child's growing understanding of her meaning, on the basis of which she continues her part in the interaction. The REACT stage of LIRP^2 reflects this first language feature in that the child is not expected, at this early stage of processing the new language, to actually verbalise. It is sufficient if the learner indicates through a non-verbal response that he understands the language to be learned.

This stage of the methodology represents the teacher's opportunity to test the student's comprehension of the new material before asking for repetitions which may either be not forthcoming, or inappropriate. It's not that we want to preserve children from ever making 'errors', for this is often a step in the learning process. However, we want to establish whether the material was well presented and clear enough for them to begin to apprehend meaning. It also provides opportunity for a few more repeats of the new material while the students respond non-verbally.

The REACT stage has two outcomes:

- the students are invited to respond in some way, either by hand signals, facial expressions or other activity to indicate whether they are understanding the language;
- the teacher is given the opportunity to assess the comprehension level of the students.

At this stage they are not expected to respond verbally with the **new** language being learned but can of course use language previously learned.

Additionally, if the teacher discerns that the students are obviously having difficulty with the new material, it is then possible to return to the beginning and present that material again, or provide the same language in a different way to maximise the students' opportunities to learn it.

REPEAT

A child learning a second language in the formal school situation is older than a first language learner. Perhaps because of this the help he is given instinctively is not the same as the help given to a very young child learning his first language. The definitive factor in first language learning is interaction between the learner and the caretaker and the context. The adult or older child, but most likely the mother, anticipates the young child's explorations in understanding and usage, accepts and extends the child's efforts by reconstructing and filling out, thus providing a model for him:

Child: 'Want up'

Mother: 'You want to get up, do you?'

The mother uses repetition and may add a further commentary:

'You want to get up, do you?'

'Get up.'

'Davey wants to get up.'

'Up you get.'[2]

This conversation could only take place when the child is asking to be picked up. The mother would not think of 'practising' this language when she was, say, feeding the child. This is a very significant feature of early first language learning: there is almost always a supporting situation to make clear the meaning of the language the child is hearing/using. Another significant feature is the amount of repetition of these situations: bathing, sleeping, eating and nappy changing are of course constants in the life of the young child, as is the language which accompanies them.

In this way over a period of time the child is offered a model and many context-dependent reptitions which he uses as a resource from which he draws, to learn what he needs to know. The child is not expected to 'repeat after me' even that language he uses in context, even though it is perhaps not 'correct'.

We don't know how many times a child needs to hear a language 'chunk' before attempting it himself, nor how often he will need to hear it remodelled and attempt to produce it before he can use it appropriately. He is encouraged to continue these immature efforts by two factors:

- the interest and the pleasure of the parent in his efforts;

- the advantage of having an adult work hard at understanding his intention, and of having his efforts achieve the desired result. Because he is vitally involved in the situations and more than a little interested in the outcomes he may happily engage in numerous repetitions of the target language before attempting to use it himself.

Another interesting factor is the L^1 learners practise routines in a play-like situation, where they do not necessarily have a partner in the process. For example, a child drawing a picture will often produce repetitive patterned responses in a sing-song manner as a running commentary on his actions:

Draw a nose

Draw a mouth

Draw a hand

Draw a foot etc.

Sometimes when children are playing together, it has been noted that interactive play with language tends to be repetitive and predictably structured, and with clearly discernible patterns of turn-taking. Children delight in making a game of this whole process.

Ventriglia (1982) has brought together a whole range of research on L^2 learners which indicates that these children, too, make a game of repeating chunks of language previously learned and remembered. The extent to which we can make this repeat stage of language teaching like a game will be the measure of the children's continuing interest in both listening to and using the language provided in the teacher's model, and in gaining mastery of it. Stories, songs and poems which include a lot of repetition and which permit natural substitution in a game-like setting, are extremely suitable in language teaching. Routines built on dialogues such as those provided in 'Jazz Chants' are doubly suitable.

The REPEAT stage provides the teacher with the opportunity to listen for pronunciation, stress and rhythm and makes it possible for the speaker/learner to take increasing control of the new language. He is invited to repeat chunks of language of increasing length and complexity. This new language will be planned into learning experiences ranging along a continuum from 'teacher controlled' to 'free'.

PRACTISE

Ventriglia's very useful book (1982) refers to the strategies which L^2 learners employ to exercise increasing control over the language they wish to use. The first of these strategies has to do with labelling words in the new language and she suggests that children appear to tie English words to concepts they already know in their first language. Once children understand what is meant, word labels in English are tied to concepts already learned. This 'bridging' leads the way into the second language. I would suggest that it is not only 'things' children label in this way, but also 'actions'. Where the child does not understand the meaning of the utterance, the bridge between L^1 understanding and L^2 usage may not be built.

The next strategy is represented by what Ventriglia calls 'chunking'. This is hearing, picking up and using phrases and routines in the second language. Some language 'chunks' are seized on by the child because of their potential usefulness, or simply because they catch the imagination of the user. They serve as the transition between the labelling processes of 'bridging' to a greater fluency in the L^2. These chunks are initially not analysable by the child because of insufficient evidence. However as other chunks are acquired, the learner/speaker begins to perceive which parts of the chunks can be freed from the rest and recombined with other, also freed, parts. This leads the speaker to the next exciting step, that of 'creating': the third powerful strategy. In this way, it appears that learners move from using language imitatively to creatively constructing utterances. Such utterances are learned in meaningful interaction with others, and depend on such interaction to refine them for other interactional settings.

We might ask: why, then, in view of the need for a lot of repetition, have oral drills gone out of fashion? They do, in theory, conform to children's natural learning strategy.

Ventriglia feels that it was the situational context which was most conspicuously absent from drill/habit formation lessons. Drills taught the forms of language but without the interaction between speakers, listeners and context of situation which between them provided the meaning of and the purpose for the interaction. A great number of language forms were learned, but were not accessible to the speaker because there was no situation which demanded they be called on. Students do not appear to be able to use structures they have practised in drills divorced from context, and do not transfer them to natural communication situations.

The LIRP^2 model leans heavily on the requirements for providing 'bridging'/'chunking'/'creating' opportunities for L^2 learners. The children move from 'modelling' the language in very small chunks such as one word and two word responses, through to learning much larger language 'chunks'. Since the learner hears many repeats of the target language in its meaningful context, there will be opportunity for the child to clarify and refine meanings.

A word on 'errors'. One thing a parent doesn't seem to include in the first language routine is a 'say it like this' routine. The target version is 'modelled', expanded etc., and the child is left to process the language he needs. In the case of L^2 learners we can guide the direction of their response, and modelling the appropriate response is more productive in the long run.

Children learning a first language drop some real 'clangers' from time to time, but this reveals an active form of processing, guessing and testing out of hypotheses.

Similarly with L^2 speakers, their approximating attempts at interacting with language result in an idiosyncratic interim grammar which will increasingly conform, over time and experience, to more native-like language competence. Evaluation of 'errors' can guide the teacher in providing the student with the opportunity to pull out the rules from the adult model to amend his or her own learnings.

The PRACTISE stage takes the student from the plateau he has reached with the new language and provides him with the opportunity to actually use it for himself.

There is a range of activities designed to support the student at this stage. As with the REPEAT stage, the student's learning experiences will range along a continuum from teacher controlled to student controlled language. It is important to have planned the learning experiences which will allow students full opportunity to take control of their own language-learning.

PRODUCE

The best language learner is the one who tenaciously seeks out opportunities for practice. Because he is confident that he can learn the language, he looks for native speakers on whom to practise, and in his confidence initiates speech with teachers and fellow students.

Teachers need consciously to work at removing from the language learning situation the student's uncertainty, embarrassment and shame brought about by knowing he may not have full control over what he wants to say. Additionally, it is important constantly to analyse the language learning situations we are setting up, so that we will be able to build a linguistic micro-environment which will help to provide as many constructive L^2 opportunities as possible for children learning English in Aboriginal settlement schools.

Notes

1. During the time she worked firstly as a teacher in 'bush' schools and as Language Adviser with the Northern Territory Department of Education, Carol Davies became increasingly aware of the need for curriculum materials in English for use in English as a second language situations.

Since there were few resources, she developed the LIRP2 methodology. Carol left the Northern Territory to take up a position interstate before completing the rationale for LIRP2. The more I read about recent findings on learning a second language, the more it appeared that LIRP2 was based on positive theory. As a result I have written up the rationale, examining the clear correlates between a first language, learning a second language and LIRP2. The ideas found here may not necessarily reflect the way Carol herself would have developed the rationale, but I trust they do justice to the model, and hopefully do not detract from it.

The full set of LIRP2 materials, including the range of 12 suggested activities under each of the four sections, is available from TESL Section, Professional Services Branch, NT Department of Education, Darwin.

2. A fuller record of this conversation can be found in Tough, 1977, ch8.

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WHAT IS THE MINIMUM LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY NECESSARY FOR ENGLISH-MEDIUM TRAINING?

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Rationale

Batchelor College is a NT Department of Education TAFE facility designed specifically to provide teacher and assistant teacher training for traditionally-oriented Aboriginal people. Given the diverse language backgrounds from which students are drawn, English as a Second Language is recognised as the only viable language of instruction, though opportunities for vernacular maintenance are provided and every attempt is made to exploit this medium in our teaching. Nevertheless, it is clear that students' success in training depends very much on their proficiency in English. At the same time it is unreasonable and unnecessary to demand the same level of proficiency in English assumed in 'mainstream' tertiary programs. In the knowledge that Batchelor College is not alone in facing the problem, this paper sets out to identify the requisite language skills to derive immediate benefit from a training program.

Australian Second Language Proficiency Ratings (ASLPR)

To identify a viable point within the continuum of English language proficiency an independent validated scale is required which characterises stages between zero knowledge of the language and adult native speaker fluency. Such a scale has been developed for the Adult Migrant Education Program by Ingram and Wylie (1982). The ASLPR have shown very high reliability and validity with a five step scale (0-5) for newly arrived migrants and refugees.

The ASLPR provides a useful initial reference point for our enquiry, but unfortunately study skills are explicitly mentioned at only two points:

1. Level 5: Native like proficiency

Obviously no-one with this level of ability will suffer any linguistic handicap in their studies, but by the same token it is unreasonable to assume that only students with this level of language proficiency can hope to benefit from a training program.

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2. Level 4: Full vocational proficiency

Where expectations are stated in terms of the ASLPR or can be converted into them, this is the level assumed by many 'mainstream' tertiary institutions around Australia and by professional accrediting authorities, where students will be expected to perform on an equal footing with native speakers. In this respect, it constitutes more of an exit point than an entry point, in that Batchelor College graduates wishing to convert to mainstream urban schools are required to achieve this level for entry to the upgrading course at Darwin Community College.

The situation at Batchelor College

Fortunately, there are a number of positive factors which make it reasonable to propose a more modest entry standard to Batchelor College.

1. All Batchelor College lecturers, whether specially trained in ESL or not, are experienced in second language instruction, and can accommodate their teaching to the language capacities of the class.

2. Since a variety of English is widely used as a lingua franca among Aborigines of different tribal backgrounds, many students in reality have quite high levels of oral proficiency which can be exploited as a basis for development of more sophisticated literacy skills.

3. Students are not required to do as much independent study as in a mainstream or traditional college, but rather have more contact hours for oral (and visual) instruction. The traditional tertiary essay is frowned on as a means of assessment, and even when an extended argument is considered necessary students have the right to opt for an oral presentation of their findings.

4. While their formal education may be limited because of the College's 'open entry' policy with respect to academic awards, many students bring significant experience and knowledge which only lacks formalisation, notably in cultural studies.

5. The fact that instruction is in English also has its positive aspects in ensuring that all students receive massive 'informal' exposure to the language, in addition to the three hours per week currently of concurrent 'formal' English classes in each semester. Students may lack the register flexibility which emerges from ASLPR Level 3, but provided a sufficient language base has been established, the 'language of the job' can be learned as a legitimate

part of the training process, as indeed it is in traditional colleges.

The Batchelor College rating scale

To specify a lower entry point requires refinement of the ASLPR to state explicitly those study skills which are assumed in any training situation. Two general constraints determine the base point for such a scale:

1 Regardless of the language they will eventually teach in, students who lack basic literacy in English after several years of schooling must be considered very dubious prospects as teachers. Candidates with no formal schooling would appear to be better served by adult education classes before they consider teacher training.

2. They must have a sufficient oral language base to benefit from informal exposure outside the English class and to learn more of the language by enquiry from native speakers. These impose a base-point which may be characterised as 'Survival Proficiency', corresponding to W1, R1, S1+ and L1+ on the ASLPR (+ is used in the ASLPR to indicate evenly-spaced intermediate points on the scale). The detailed description of this level is attached as Appendix A. Clearly it does **not** indicate zero knowledge of the language. Rather it indicates potential for training.

The discrepancy between oral and written expectations, which is matched by the fact that students' oral proficiency is almost invariably in advance of their control of the written word because of the lack of a literacy tradition in tribal Aboriginal communities, suggests that the whole scale should be 'skewed' downwards for the written skills. Thus, where the end point for listening and speaking is native like proficiency (ASLPR Level 5), reading and writing are not specified beyond the equivalent of Level 4+ on the ASLPR.

Between these extremes, the ASLPR (itself derived from the Absolute Language Proficiency Ratings of the US Foreign Service Institute School of Language Studies) has been adapted to the circumstances of Aboriginal trainee (assistant) teachers by redistributing detailed specifications from the gross levels to fill out the unspecified intermediate points on 2+, 3+ and 4+ on the ASLPR, and developing the whole scale in terms of graded study skills. This provides a total of seven stages with characterisations of the abilities expected for each of the four macro-skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing). While this meant giving up the benefit of an already validated scale, it was hoped the Batchelor College rating scale remains close enough in spirit to the ASLPR for a skilled tester to make the finer discriminations reliably.

The descriptions of the seven levels are attached as Appendix B.

Possible entry requirements

The base point of the scale does not necessarily constitute the most suitable entry point to teacher training. All it indicates is **potential** for training. The most desirable entry requirement must in reality reconcile two conflicting demands:

1. It must give the student the **maximum** chance to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes in subject areas.

2. It must make minimum assumptions about students' language proficiency.

In view of these constraints, the scale does in fact suggest two other possible entry points. In choosing between them, the programming implications should be taken into account.

(a) **Stage 4 (full study proficiency)** This corresponds roughly to Level 3 for written skills and 3+ orally on the ASLPR. It probably constitutes the minimum point at which English classes as such could be dispensed with in favour of dealing with language problems as they arise in the context of subject matter teaching. While such an arrangement has the advantage of guaranteeing total integration of language instruction in the service of the demands of the training program, the only students who can be assumed to have reached this level are those who use English as their first language -- a decided minority at Batchelor College as a matter of policy. Even then, it is perfectly possible that some would lack the written skills assumed for formal study, the development of which we see as the training institutions's responsibility. In any case, it is probably unnecessary to place such demands on students in view of the fact that most are training as assistant teachers (rather than teachers), which involves more 'hands on' experience than book learning.

(b) **Stage 2 (minimum study. proficiency)** Given the advantages of the Batchelor College situation noted earlier, I believe that a full training program is viable even where students have achieved no more than Level 2 to 2+ on the ASLPR. The proviso is that they would need concurrent English lessons, particularly devoted to study skills. This arrangement has the advantage, on the other hand, that students have an opportunity to try their hands at simulated study tasks without prejudice to their results in required subject areas. At this level, it seems to me that it would be inefficient to deal with language problems subject by subject, since so many of them will depend on the same basic study skills.

From the opposing perspective, to settle for anything less means that student teachers during their teaching practice might actually have less English than their pupils, in that insofar as correlations can be drawn, this level may not exceed the expectations for Year 4 of the NT Primary Core Curriculum for Aboriginal Schools. Indeed, it corresponds approximately with the oral abilities that mother tongue speakers are expected to bring to an urban school, and scarcely goes beyond Year 2 as far as literacy is concerned. Clearly it is quite unrealistic to expect students to carry out practice teaching tasks, particularly in urban schools, if they have not achieved this level of proficiency.

(c) Stage 0 (survival proficiency) The base point of our scale is thus too low for the needs of these particular students. Rather, it appears to constitute the absolute minimum at which courses in English for academic purposes could commence. Such courses can provide a transition between the minimal common core of life skills and the more specific demands of studying. At this point, students are still learning to read; they must now be brought to a stage where they can read to learn. Until then, any content area studies constitute no more than simulations in preparation for the real training to commence. It is particularly important to recognise this reality in the Batchelor College external first year Remote Area Teacher Education (RATE) program where students depend much more on written material.

The Batchelor College English sequence

The Batchelor College Rating Scale has proven useful to lecturers in all subject areas as a means of checking that their material does not place linguistic demands on students beyond the minimum expectation at that stage of their course. The precise proficiency assumed is phased to increase as stuents progress through the three years of training for the award of an Associate Diploma. Concurrent English units are tuned to this sequence, so that the basic requirements for progression are as follows:

1st year - Stage 3 (full social proficiency)

2nd year - Stage 4 (full study proficiency)

3rd year - Stage 5 (minimum professional proficiency)

However, not all students can be forced into this mould, of course. There are regularly students who enter with Stage 3 proficiency (and even beyond). Such students can undertake an accelerated sequence by exempting them from the Stage 3 units. This allows them to reach Stage 6 before leaving Batchelor, which corresponds to the entry expectation for the conversion course at Darwin Community College, and is assumed at many other institutions. The accelerated sequence is thus:

1st year - Stage 4

2nd year - Stage 5

3rd year - Stage 6

Although this means that students in the standard stream may need further work before they could transfer to mainstream institutions, Stage 5 appears to be sufficient for the typical graduate to meet the limited professional demands of working in the early childhood program and/or in a bilingual school where the Aboriginal member of a team uses the local vernacular as medium of instruction.

While the primary purpose of the Rating Scale is as a measure for criterion referenced assessment, it also suggests performance objectives for the various English units. These fall into essentially three strands:

- social survival (life skills)
- study skills
- professional skills.

Some attention is given to every strand in each year, but the main emphasis shifts from one to the other with each successive year, at least for the standard sequence. As students take English for three hours a week in every semester, they have a total of 90 hours currently to progress from one stage to the next over two semesters. Unfortunately, this does not seem to be enough for all that has to be done, and we are studying the feasibility of increasing class contact to four hours a week, which may allow us to indulge in such 'luxuries' as a little Aboriginal literature in English for personal development, particularly at Stage 6.

While a Stage 2 entry point is considerably lower than that required in 'mainstream' institutions, it still imposes an obligation to consider how candidates could meet such a requirement when standards of literacy are often still much weaker in Aboriginal communities. However, this does not make candidates 'untrainable'. Rather, it suggests preliminary language improvement work. Batchelor College is meeting this need currently through a pilot 'access' course of one semester focusing on literacy, numeracy and general knowledge. The course is not restricted to aspiring teachers, but is available to any adult Aboriginal wishing to eventually enter a training program. With up to 12 hours per week devoted to English, we confidently expect to bring most students to Stage 2, to dovetail with our entry requirements for teacher training. But it is recognised that some students may require a further semester, depending on their starting level and rate of progress.

Validation

The ultimate test of whether the various entry and exit points postulated are viable would be to correlate students' results in English with their progress in other subjects. Consequently, we must consider the proposed program as experimental until such time as we have students graduating from third year. However, nothing to date suggests that Level 2 is too low as an entry point. On the contrary, a few students who began their studies with less than Level 2 have progressed to second year, though not without difficulty. It remains to be seen whether they have reached a threshold beyond which further progress will be hampered by limited language proficiency.

Conclusion

There may be no absolute answer to the question posed in this paper. It may well be the case that some disciplines depend even more heavily on a high order of communication abilities. Vocations such as management, the public service, legal aid and translating would seem to involve more context reduced language than teacher training. On the other hand, apprentice-type training with more direct 'hands on' experience may be viable with predominantly context-embedded language, and a correspondingly lower initial proficiency. The actual point of entry needs to be determined in the light of the specific training demands, but I suspect that for most vocations it would fall in a band between Stage 1 and Stage 3. If expectations are made explicit, a number of restricted programs for second language speakers could well lower the linguistic hurdle they currently impose on candidates, and even mainstream institutions could well consider opening their doors to minority groups a little earlier.

Reference

Ingram, D E and Wylie, E 1982 **Australian second language proficiency ratings**. Adult Migrant Education Program, Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Canberra.

APPENDIX A

Batchelor College -- minimum entry requirements for
[read ~~across~~ across both pages for each category, e.g. W0]

General Description

W0 **Able to satisfy basic survival needs**

Can write all letters of the alphabet and copy most sentences accurately. Can write personal details and a short series of sentences about things with which s/he is familiar (not necessarily with formal accuracy in vocabulary and grammar, but comprehensibly). Inadequate vocabulary and fractured sentence structure and other grammatical and spelling errors frequently cause misunderstanding on other topics. Little precision in information conveyed owing to tentative state of grammatical development and little or no use of modifiers i.e. verb forms, adjectives, adverbs, phrases, clauses etc. that are used to modify and qualify ideas.

R0 **Able to read personal and place names, street signs, office and shop designations, numbers, isolated words and phrases, and short sentences**

Can recognise and name all the upper and lower case letters in the alphabet. Can read simple sentences with ease but may have difficulty with sentences of greater complexity. Can read and comprehend (but not necessarily fluently) very short, syntactically simple texts concerning his or her everyday life, but has considerable difficulty in comprehending texts with more complex discourse structure. A reading vocabulary of at least 500 words.

S0 **Able to satisfy survival needs and limited social demands**

Although s/he shows some spontaneity in language production, fluency is still very uneven. Can initiate and sustain a general conversation but has little understanding of the social conventions of conversation; grammatical errors still frequently cause misunderstanding. Limited vocabulary range necessitates much hesitation and circumlocution. The more common tense forms occur but errors are frequent in
[S0 contd over]

English language (Survival Proficiency) Revised Oct. 1983

Examples of specific tasks

Can fill in uncomplicated forms with personal details (name address, marital status etc.). Can write simple sentences including brief instructions. Can copy from written script quite accurately the sorts of information indicated in R0. Can write down name, address, appointment and simple directions when given orally or spelt out. Can fill out bank deposit and withdrawal forms. Can produce a short series of simple sentences on a familiar topic (e.g. personal details for a job application, short simple narration of an everyday occurrence).

Can read uncomplicated forms requiring basic personal details (name, address, marital status) but will require help in comprehending others. Can comprehend short, high frequency traffic signs, shop designations, basic timetables, and common Australian menus.

From lists (e.g. street directory, index) can isolate the information s/he requires. Can use the 'Yellow Pages' to locate a product. Can read a notice for a function and identify the nature, name, location, date and time of the event. Can read a short series of simple sentences narrating an everyday event. Can comprehend and act on a short series of simple instructions in the classroom context. Can comprehend simple directions relating to how to get from x to y.

Can cope with less routine situations in shop, post office, bank (e.g. asking for a larger size, returning an unsatisfactory purchase). Can explain some personal symptoms to a doctor or nurse, but with limited precision. Can modify utterances to express uncertainty or the hypothetical by single word or other simple devices (e.g. **I think, maybe**) and has tentative use of if (conditional). [S0 contd over]

General description

[S0 contd]
formation and selection. Can use most question forms. **Word** order, even in short utterances, may frequently be wrong, and can create misunderstandings.

Aware of basic cohesive features (e.g. pronouns, verb inflections), but many are unreliable, especially if **less** immediate in reference. Simple discourse markers (e.g. **so, but, then**) are used relating to closely contiguous parts of the text but extended discourse is largely a series of discrete utterances. Articulation is reasonably comprehensible to native speakers, can combine most phonemes with reasonable comprehensibility, but still has difficulty in producing certain sounds, in certain positions, or in certain combinations and speech may still be laboured. Stress and intonation patterns are not native-like and may interfere with communication. Still has to repeat utterances frequently to make her/himself understood by the general public. S/he now has a sufficient language base to benefit from out-of-class experience and to permit him or her to explore the language by enquiry from native speakers.

L0 **Able to satisfy survival needs and limited social demands**

Can get the gist of most conversations relevant to his/her survival needs. Less dependent on contextual support but comprehension is still significantly assisted by face-to-face contact, careful articulation and slow rate of utterance (e.g. 100-120wpm).

While global comprehension of utterances may be generally secure, deficiencies in the listening skill will often lead him or her to miss more specific information: misinterpretations are frequent and, in less familiar situations, s/he may require repetition, paraphrase or explanation. More sensitive to morphology, recognises changes of tense and generally comprehends regular forms without having to rely on contextual support. Can generally distinguish statements, questions and commands by intonation etc. but has limited ability to deduce other than superficial meaning.

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Examples of specific tasks

S0 contd

Can express simple **because** relationship. In school situation can communicate most routine needs not requiring specialised register (e.g. out of expendable commodity) and basic details of unpredictable occurrences, e.g. electricity failure. Can ask the meaning of an unfamiliar word, or ask for the English word for a demonstrable item. Can generally use I, **me**, **you**, **we**, **my**, **your**, but other personal pronouns and possessive adjectives are often hesitant or wrong.

Can hear the more prominent contracted forms in careful speech. Can comprehend only isolated words or phrases in a conversation between non-Aboriginal speakers and will fail to comprehend the subsumed cultural knowledge. S/he has no facility in comprehending speakers of dialects other than that most frequently experienced. Comprehends very little of a radio broadcast and has great difficulty using the telephone. Can comprehend only broad train of events of a TV drama, little of less visually supported telecasts can act on a simple series of commands such as 'Find a duster and clean the board' and warnings such as 'Don't touch that switch'.

APPENDIX B

Level 1

General description

W1 Able to satisfy all survival needs and limited social demands

The thrust of development through this level is towards more spontaneity and creativity, and increased flexibility. Can write a sufficiently wide range of informal English to satisfy his or her survival needs, though errors in grammar, spelling and style may frequently interfere with comprehension. Limited vocabulary range necessitates much circumlocution. The more common tense forms occur but errors are frequent in formation and selection. Word order, even in short sentences, may frequently be wrong, and can create misunderstandings. Aware of basic cohesive features (e.g. pronouns, verb inflections), but many are unreliable, especially if less immediate in reference. Aware of but not confident with the formal devices used in writing letters and has limited ability to vary them to match different recipients. Has the ability to use a dictionary to check spelling. Longer stretches of discourse tend to lose coherence.

R1 Able to read short texts on subjects related to his or her immediate needs

Can follow a simple, compound or complex sentence, but has little ability to handle many discourse markers commonly used in the written mode. More sensitive to morphology, recognises changes of tense, and generally comprehends regular forms without having to rely on contextual support. Can read for pleasure simplified versions of stories written within a 1000 word vocabulary.

(Minimum Social Proficiency)

Examples of specific tasks

Can write a simple covering letter (e.g. to accompany a cheque or a completed application form). Can convey a simple message by telegram (e.g. accepting a job offered) though the conventions and form may often be inappropriate. Can write a note to school requesting leave. Can copy all notes from blackboard. Can make list of points to remember. Can respond to highly guided written assignments in short-answer form. Can modify utterances to express uncertainty or the hypothetical by single word or other simple devices (e.g. **possibly, maybe, I think**) and has tentative use of if (conditional). Can express simple **because** relationship. Can write about likes and dislikes in areas that are of particular interest to him/herself.

Can understand a simple circular on a familiar topic e.g. sports day, provided that some prior explanation has been given. Can recognise simple relationships between short combinations of clauses and sentences marked by **and, but, so, then** or other simple features indicated in W1. Can follow a short series of simple instructions for using an everyday object (e.g. telephone) if they are accompanied by illustrations and do not contain unfamiliar specialised vocabulary. Can discriminate between widely differing letters such as an apparently personalised sales promotion and correspondence requiring action (e.g. overdue account or alteration to delivery routine) even if neither is fully understood.

General description

S1 Able to satisfy routine social demands

Can handle with confidence, if not facility, most social situations, including introductions and casual conversations about current events, as well as work, family, and autobiographical information. Has limited ability to vary the 'tone' of his or her utterances. Hesitations are still frequent as s/he searches for vocabulary or grammar but has a speaking vocabulary sufficient to express him/herself simply with some circumlocutions on most topics pertinent to his or her everyday life. Has very limited register flexibility, though where a specialist register has been experienced (e.g. classroom discourse), may have acquired some features of it. Ability to describe and give precise information is limited by still tentative emergence of modification devices.

L1 Able to understand in routine social situations

Can understand most conversations in everyday social situations though may sometimes misinterpret or need utterances to be repeated or reworded. Can cope with the lower range of normal native speaker rate of utterance (e.g. 120-150wpm) but is soon lost with faster rates and has difficulty in understanding conversations between native speakers. Has much difficulty comprehending extended lines of argument and understands only the simplest discourse markers. Unable to mobilise much cultural knowledge to assist comprehension.

Examples of specific tasks

Can give detailed information about family, living conditions, educational background; can describe and converse on everyday things in his or her environment (e.g. the weather); can describe his or her most recent job or activity. May sometimes offend by unintended blandness or aggressiveness or irritate by over-deference where native speakers expect informality.

Can readily understand the sort of information indicated in S1 if given directly. Does not fully comprehend radio or TV broadcasts, but has fair understanding of frequently repeatec commercials said slowly in the standard dialect without significant cultural assumptions. Recognises simple relationships between short combinations of clauses and sentences (e.g. marked by **and**, **but**, **if**, **because**) but fails to comprehend more complex relationships or more complex discourse marked over a longer text (e.g. in lectures). Ability to comprehend still depends greatly on the native speaker modifying his or her language appropriately. If heavily marked, understands the implied annoyance, sarcasm etc. in such utterances as 'Haven't you finished yet?' or 'That's great!'.

Level 2

General description

W2 Able to satisfy routine social demands

Has an active vocabulary sufficient to handle (with moderate confidence and sufficient accuracy that comprehension by a monolingual native speaker is not seriously impeded) those written forms s/he needs in everyday life at home and in daily commerce. Can write most words and sentences s/he can produce orally but longer texts may lack coherence through a failure to maintain sentence structure, to structure the thought sequence acceptably, or to use discourse markers appropriately. Can write simple sentences from dictation with reasonable structural accuracy, spelling and punctuation. Has very limited register flexibility. Ability to describe and give precise information is limited by still tentative emergence of modification devices.

R2 Able to read simple prose, in a form equivalent to typescript or printing, on subjects frequently met in his or her everyday life

With extensive use of a dictionary or the support of a lexicon, can get the sense of those written forms frequently met in his or her everyday life. Word attack is now sufficiently developed to be able to recognise most words in his or her oral vocabulary. However, will still be confused by silent letters, and rarely occurring non-phonetic forms. Can read neat cursive writing but more slowly. A reading vocabulary of about 1500 words. Decreased dependence on illustration.

S2 Able to satisfy limited study requirements

Can usually handle elementary constructions quite accurately but does not have thorough or confident control of the grammar especially in longer constructions. Accent, though often quite faulty, is intelligible: undue exertion on the part of a native speaking listener is not often necessary though some repetition in order to be understood may occur. Overall rate of utterance may remain less than the native speaker's as a result of hesitations. Cohesion and discourse in short utterances or conversations are secure but inconsistencies occur in longer ones.

(Minimum Study Proficiency)

Examples of specific tasks

Can write a personal letter on simple everyday topics. Can write to order goods or request services or to carry out other uncomplicated and routine tasks. Can fill out most forms regularly encountered in everyday life (e.g. Medicare, bankbook or passport application etc.). Can describe his or her most recent job or activity, and write other short descriptive paragraphs comprehensibly. Can take down a simple message in note form.

Using a dictionary, can get the sense of personal letters on everyday topics and simple stylised forms such as invitations and replies. Can follow most clearly presented sequential instructions (e.g. accompanying household appliance) when they are written in a non-specialist register, when she or he has plenty of time and has use of a dictionary. Can understand straightforward advertisements (e.g. products, cars for sale) providing they do not contain many abbreviations. With assistance, can extract specified information from simple textbooks. Can understand a simple circular on an unfamiliar topic e.g. a conference.

Can communicate on the spot with fellow staff or immediate superior (e.g. ask questions about work, make complaints about work conditions, or ask for changes in work or study conditions, time off etc.); can give simple messages over the telephone; can give directions and instructions for simple tasks in everyday life (e.g. to pupils). Has tentative use of polite request forms e.g. involving **could**, **would**. Can give short answers to questions about studies, but may have difficulty in pursuing an extended discussion on such topics.

General description

L2 Able to understand in limited study situations

Less dependent on face-to-face contact, and the presence of other participants in the conversation does not normally cause comprehension problems. Has little ability in specialist registers but can follow routine communications in the work place and some unpredictable utterances provided they involve mainly the non-specialist register or are supported by the context. Provided the topic discussed is familiar, he or she is able to extrapolate the meaning of occasional unknown words from context and deduce sentence meaning. Has some difficulty following extended lines of argument or complex discourse patterns.

Level 3

General description

W3 Able to satisfy limited study requirements

Can initiate written composition in which errors in structure, spelling and punctuation do not materially cloud the communication of ideas about topics arising in limited study situations not requiring spcialist skills. Can usually handle elementary constructions quite accurately but does not have thorough or confident control of the grammar especially in longer constructions. Cohesion and discourse in short texts are secure but inconsistencies occur in longer ones. Has limited ability to vary the 'tone' of his or her writing. Most academic writing requires considerable guidance.

R3 Able to read simple prose on subjects within a familiar context

With extensive use of a dictionary or the support of a lexicon, can grasp the main ideas in appropriately simplified textbooks. Has some difficulty following extended lines of argument. Can infer meanings of occasional unknown words from the context; some ability

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Examples of specific tasks

Can take simple telephone messages in response to his or her own questions or on familiar or expected topics; can comprehend and act on sequential instructions (e.g. 'When the red light goes off, push the button'). Can get the gist of TV documentaries with strong visual support delivered at lower rates of utterance. Can in most situations broadly discriminate the 'tone' of utterances (e.g. irony). While he or she may pick up a number of isolated facts from a lecture, grasp of th thread of the argument is uncertain.

(Full Social Proficiency)

Examples of specific tasks

Can write a simple report on an everyday event. Can write a short paragraph setting out and supporting an opinion. Can take notes from short texts used in studies. Can complete extended written assignments in short answer note form; connected answers require a plan. Can write about the present, past and future handling the appropriate verb forms adequately for the communication of ideas.

Using a dictionary, can get the sense of routine uncomplicated business letters and news items from the daily press (but longer reports and commentaries only with considerable difficulty). Can seek information through classified advertisements and infer meaning of unknown

General description

[R3 contd]
at unlocking meaning in structural forms not in his or her productive repertoire. A reading vocabulary of about 2000 words. Little ability in specialist registers but can follow routine administrative communications and some unpredictable messages provided they involve mainly the non-specialist register or are supported by the context.

S3 **Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most informal conversations on practical and social topics**

Can discuss his or her own particular interests and special fields of competence with reasonable ease though there may be some circumlocutions; accent may still not be native like; control of grammar good; fluency is rarely disrupted by hesitations.

L3 **Able to comprehend sufficiently readily to be able to participate effectively in most informal conversations with monolingual English speakers**

Has some ability to see beyond superficial meaning and to comprehend less subtle or esoteric cultural implications, but has limited ability to comprehend if there is extensive use of specialist registers, though in his or her own field can, with paraphrase or explanation, comprehend routine conversations between monolingual English speakers, at normal rates of utterance (about 180wpm) even if occasional words are unfamiliar. Rarely has to ask for an utterance to be repeated or paraphrased in social situations, except where speech is heavily loaded with colloquial features. From this level on, she or he has a significant language repertoire, so that she or he can comprehend lectures containing an increasing number of unfamiliar language items or cultural references.

Examples of specific tasks

[R3 contd]
abbreviations. Can read for pleasure modern novels simplified for the non-native reader. Can use contents pages and index to locate assigned study reading.

Can handle most social situations with confidence. Can enter, exit from and participate in conversation with or between European Australians; can speak to educated native speakers of English or to those at his own social-economic level on general topics without unintentionally amusing or irritating them: can cope with everyday, difficult linguistic situations such as broken plumbing or a personal misunderstanding.

Can take information confidently by telephone; can compehend a speech or discussion on a non-technical subject and can, if necessary, paraphrase it; can get gist of radio and television news bulletins though more rapid speakers may cause comprehension to suffer. Can comprehend most sums of money and most numerals though longer items may have to be repeated. Can follow lectures, but not take notes at the same time.

Level 4

General description

W4 **Able to write with sufficient accuracy in structures and spelling to meet basic study needs**

Can write with reasonable ease and accuracy on matters relevant to his or her interests, rarely lacks a word and is then able to circumvent it. Can use complex sentences and a variety of modification devices to convey meaning reasonably accurately. Discourse structure beyond the sentence level may still sometimes seem non-native, limiting academic writing capacities.

R4 **Able to read standard newspaper items addressed to the general reader, routine correspondence**

and other everyday materials (e.g. magazines and similar recreational literature). Can grasp the essentiais of articles of the above types without using a dictionary; for detailed understanding, explanation or moderately frequent use of a dictionary or lexicon is still required. Has occasional difficulty with unusually complex structures and low frequency idioms. Has some ability to see beyond superficial meaning and to comprehend less subtle or esoteric cultural implications. From this level on, she or he can comprehend texts containing an increasing number of unfamiliar language items or cultural references.

S4 **Able to speak the language sufficiently well to satisfy most study requirements**

The key factor now emerging is register flexibility. He or she is now able to modify his or her language to meet the differing register requirements of situations with which he or she is familiar in his or her personal and academic life. Vocabulary is broad enough that he or she rarely has to grope for a word and can readily overcome gaps with circumlocutions. Able to convey meaning precisely in reasonably complex sentences or by using with reasonable accuracy a wide range of modification devices. Errors rarely interfere with understanding or disturb the native speaker. Can handle limited professional requirements but will need help in handling any complications or difficulties.

(Full Study Proficiency)

Examples of specific tasks

Can write in all those forms used in daily life (personal and official letters, notes, telegrams, invitations etc.) without errors intruding on a native speaker's comprehension and acceptance. Can make a plan for an extended assignment in note form. Can write a report on a topic of academic interest after discussion, but still requires a plan to write a review.

Can readily grasp the essential meaning of newspaper items, simple articles in fields relevant to education, and routine personal and official correspondence. Can read such items and summarise their key points. Has some sensitivity to variations in style and register and to nuances in meaning but will frequently fail to perceive those that are more subtle or restricted to European culture. Can read fluently for pleasure simply structured prose and literary and other texts which do not assume significant cultural knowledge or ability to handle complex discourse structure. Can locate reading material relevant to his or her purposes and interests and sample content to determine whether in-depth reading is warranted.

Can handle with confidence those study situations relevant to his or her own needs and experiences. Can present and debate his or her own or others' ideas and attitudes on topics with which he or she is familiar or which are relevant to his or her own culture. Can speak to educated native speakers on relevant professional topics without unintentionally amusing or irritating them.

General description

L4 Able to comprehend in most study situations

Can comprehend formal classes and discussions on educational topics sufficiently readily to be able to participate effectively. Comprehension rarely affected by complex discourse patterns. Only occasionally baffled by colloquialisms and regionalisms. Can comprehend even fast rates of utterance (e.g. 180-200wpm and above) in the target dialect.

Level 5

General description

W5 Able to write sufficiently accurately to meet most study demands and limited professional needs

Can produce written English at a good speed, showing variety of structure, effective use of phrases, clauses and other modification devices, clarity and compactness of expression and logical sequencing. Can vary style over broad parameters (e.g. between personal and education contexts) and use the functions appropriate to them, though may still lack some subtlety in differentiating between some contexts. Errors rarely interfere with understanding or distrub the native speaker. Can handle limited professional requirements but will need help in handling any complications or difficulties.

R5 Able to read reports and technical material in his or her special field

With some assistance, can gain detailed understanding of articles of the above type. Has some sensitivity to variations in style and to nuances in meaning. Can exploit discourse markers to penetrate author's intent as well as stated facts. Only occasionally baffled by colloquialisms and regionalisms.

Examples of specific tasks

Can extract the essentials from lectures in his or her field and make notes. Has reasonably detailed comprehension of radio and television news readers. Can comprehend numerals as readily as does a native speaker. Can summarise informative discussions e.g. documentaries.

(Minimum Professional Proficiency)

Examples of specific tasks

Can use those basic registers needed in study or work situations. Can independently plan and structure longer texts (e.g. reviews, reports) appropriately, making ample use of the available devices of discourse and cohesion. However, considerable guidance is still needed with full essays. Can write creatively in a chosen literary form.

Can read popularised textbooks and technical material in his or her special field and readily grasp their essential meaning. Can summarise their key points. Is able to read extended texts (e.g. novels, informative books) with sufficient comprehension without reference to a dictionary to ensure pleasure even though some words will be unknown. Can rapidly locate required information in a textbook.

General description

S5 **Able to use the language fluently and accurately on all levels normally pertinent to his or her personal, social and academic needs**

Can participate in most conversations within the range of his or her experience with a high degree of fluency and precision of vocabulary; while he or she has mastered commonly occurring colloquial and idiomatic forms, some misuse of other items may occur; although enough particular characteristics remain to distinguish him or her from a native speaker, she or he can respond appropriately even in unfamiliar situations; errors of grammar are quite rare and unsystematic, and he or she can usually correct them in retrospect; his or her language is always easily understood by a native speaker.

L5 **Able to comprehend easily and accurately in all personal, social and academic contexts relevant to his or her experience**

Can readily understand all speech of that variety of Australian English she or he normally encounters. Can comprehend the generally recognised varieties of Australian English and other similar varieties. Can appreciate and respond to register variations.

Examples of specific tasks

Can initiate discussion on academic topics without causing offence. Can convey his or her exact meaning in social and academic discussions unrestricted by lexical or grammatical deficiencies; can modify his or her speech appropriately according to the situation and its register requirements. Can handle informal interpreting from and into his or her first language if necessary.

Can comprehend accurately in social and academic discussions unrestricted by lexical or grammatical deficiencies. Can comprehend most radio and television documentaries, and accurately identify the speaker's mood, tone, etc. Can comprehend such varieties as Educated, General and Broad Australian, RP and NE American, but will have some difficulty with more distant varieties. Can handle informal interpreting into first language.

Level 6

General description

W6 Able to write fluently and accurately on all levels normally pertinent to his or her personal, social and academic needs

Errors in grammar or vocabulary are rare. He or she rarely needs to consult a dictionary to express him/herself and is able to consider and select from a wide range of words and structures to make meaning precise. Has considerable sensitivity to register requirements and can modify his or her language appropriately. Colloquialisms and cultural references are nearly always apposite.

R6 Able to read all styles and forms of the language pertinent to his or her personal, social and academic needs

Rarely troubled by stylistic variations. Can vary speed according to specific purpose -- full detailed understanding, getting gist, sampling content, searching for particular information etc. Cursive writing poses no greater difficulty than for a native speaker.

S6 Able to use the language fluently and accurately on all levels

Can operate effectively in all registers likely to be encountered in his or her personal, social, academic and professional life. Some phonological features may exhibit minor non-native characteristics, but they never intrude nor inhibit comprehensibility. Has complete fluency in the language such that his or her speech on all levels is fully accepted by native speakers of the same socio-cultural variety.

L6 Able to comprehend easily and accurately in all contexts

Can comprehend fully all varieties and registers likely to be encountered in his or her personal social, academic or vocational life. Is rarely troubled by speech in less familiar contexts. Has the same degree of comprehension as a native speaker of the same socio-cultural variety.

Full Professional Proficiency)

Examples of specific tasks

Can convey meaning precisely and accurately unrestricted by lexical, morphological, syntactic or spelling deficiencies. Can plan and execute all types of academic assignment. Can write with substantial correctness a well organised, clear and forceful essay of ample length, especially one which expresses Aboriginal insight and sentiments. Some ability at critical and evaluative writing

Can use reading effectively for reference purposes. With occasional use of dictionary can read most prose in any area directed to the general reader, and moderately difficult material in his or her field of study.

Can participate in professional discussions with a high degree of fluency and precision of vocabulary. Can exchange ideas and argue cases clearly and with conviction on a wide range of topics in group situations; in particular, can present the Aboriginal viewpoint and interpret Aboriginal culture to European Australians. Very occasional non-native syllable stress, intonation pattern, allophone or phoneme substitution.

Can follow tertiary level lectures and tutorials addressed to native speakers, and addresses and discussions at professional conferences. Can generally recognise the educational level and origin of speaker.

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Level 7

General description

W7 **Able to write fluently and accurately on all levels pertinent to his or her needs**

The learner's written language in all its forms is accepted by native speakers of the same socio-cultural variety in all its features including formal accuracy, structural variation, word choice, idiom, colloquialisms, register appropriateness, discourse structure (including thought sequence and coherence), subtlety of meaning and cultural references.

R7 **Able to read all styles and forms of the language pertinent to his or her needs**

Reading speed will approximate that of comparably educated native speakers. Can comprehend all varieties and registers likely to be encountered. Full functional use of reading skill to serve the individual's recreational, educational and professional needs.

S7 **Speaking proficiency equivalent to that of a native speaker of the same socio-cultural variety**

At this point, all language related cultural barriers are removed and, to all intents and purposes, he or she acts as a native speaker. Approximates educated native speakers in rate of utterance, suprasegmental and paralinguistic features, and breadth and appropriateness of grammar, vocabulary, idiom, colloquialisms and cultural references. Deviations from educated native speaker forms, special register features, or stylistic variations will only be those recognisable as native speaker variants.

L7 **Listening proficiency equivalent to that of a native speaker of the same socio-cultural variety**

Has complete comprehension of the spoken language of native or non-native speakers in all its features (including idiom, colloquialisms, subtlety of meaning, and cultural references), whether spoken face-to-face, by telephone or on the media.

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(Native-like Proficiency)

Examples of specific tasks

Can perform as effectively as a native speaker of the same socio-cultural variety in all writing tasks normally encountered. Can write with ease and enthusiasm on a variety of subjects, especially within his or her chosen profession. Can write clearly and appropriately on a somewhat theoretical and abstract level, demonstrating developing skills in the presentation of a sustained argument, including the marshalling of ideas and the answering of objections and criticisms.

Can comprehend most literary forms though more difficult works (e.g. heavily culture-dependent or in a form remote from 'normal' discourse) may cause some problems. Can read moderately difficult prose readily in any area directed to the general reader, and all material in own special field including official and professional documents and correspondence.

Can handle all tasks he or she normally encounters and has native-like flexibility in new ones. Can handle humour and innuendo as effectively as a native speaker.

Can perform as effectively as most educated native speakers in all listening activities and has a native speaker's flexibility in new ones. Perceives and responds to style, humour and innuendo as effectively as a native speaker.

THE PLACE OF LINGUISTICS IN TEACHER TRAINING FOR ABORIGINES AND ISLANDERS*

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The thoughts expressed in this paper result from seven years of teaching Aboriginal and Islander students in Batchelor, a town to the south of Darwin, Northern Territory. Most of this teaching has taken place in the School of Australian Linguistics, a unit which is attached to Darwin Community College and which trains literacy workers, transcribers, translators and assistants to bilingual schools in Aboriginal areas. The School also supplies the linguistics and language studies component of the Aboriginal teacher training course in Batchelor run at Batchelor College by the Northern Territory Department of Education.

In this paper the term 'European' is used in its Northern Territory sense to mean 'Non-Aboriginal'. The term is not restricted to those born in Europe but used strictly includes Australians of European extraction and used in a loose sense includes some non-Aborigines of Asian descent. The term Anglophone is used here for 'English-speaking' and Non-anglophone both for those who do not speak English and for those whose English is severely limited due to brief contact.

The purpose of this paper is to argue for the place of linguistics in all teacher training schemes as relevant to practical teaching, general scholarship and cross-cultural sensitivity and to argue for its particular place in training schemes for ethnic minorities.

The place of training

Lecturers who are European and who find themselves training traditional Aborigines are forced into a state of inquiry and reflection by their work. Amongst many other concepts such as 'career' which are complacently assumed to be valuable in European society, they are forced to question also the concept of 'training'.

In the European-Australian culture we naturally assume that people working must have a training for a job. This concept is foreign to tribal culture just as it was also foreign to earlier stages of large-scale European culture. In most fields of work in the past, one simply learned to do a job by doing it.

Until late in the last century teaching was an occupation for which there was no specific training. Teachers learned the job by actually doing it. There was no such thing as a teacher training course. Young teachers picked up the requisite skills as they went along. As with many other occupations, hard experience produced skill and competence.

Since teachers need to be literate, numerate and have some knowledge of content, there was always training in the sense that teachers needed to be one step ahead of their students. Primary schooling with or without secondary schooling can be regarded as training in knowledge and control of subject matter. This schooling was always in the personal backgrounds of the vast majority of practising teachers in the past. Therefore there was always a part of the **scholarship** component of training in the preparatory background of practising teachers, but this same background was also present in other practising professionals such as writers, surveyors, librarians and clerks.

The place of strategy in training

At some stage in the preparation of people for teaching it was realised that there are distinctive functions required of teachers which are not required of other professionals like librarians.

What are those distinctive functions? Compared with librarians, teachers are performers and managers. They are required and expected to address an audience. For primary teachers, the audience could be anything from a small group of 10 children to a combined class of 80. For a lecturer, the range is greater, from tutorial groups of two to visual audiences of 1000 in a medium sized university and with closed-circuit television to an unlimited number, sometimes 5000 or more. Each teacher has to learn to project his or her personality like any other performer. Connected with the performance requirement in which the teacher is exposed to the overt or covert criticism of an audience there is a management requirement. In schools a teacher is required to direct a group. In the past, and still today in underdeveloped areas, a group of children in a class would be large, 40 or more. Management of even half that number is quite a task. It involves establishment of rapport, control, management and planning.

A teacher trained in these distinctive management and performance skills should be able to give clear presentation, prepare projects, write lesson plans and manage and control a class. At higher levels, teachers can be trained to do further tasks such as timetable planning. This component of teacher training where techniques are abstracted from the content or knowledge required, can be called the **strategy** component.

In the past for school teachers and still today for university lecturers, this component would be larned by trial and error during performance of the job. However, when training college courses were instituted, the designers who had had experience saw the need for a formal strategy component in the course. My own exprience as one who went into a temporary primary teaching role without training is that this component is very necessary. It saves much wasted time in the practice, learning by induction.

As I understand from those involved in teacher training courses before the 1950-1960 period, the strategy component of training dominated courses almost to the point of excluding scholarship. This emphasis became the basis for the 'relevance' argument, i.e. that all academic content had to be justified as relevant to the practice of teaching.

Usually, once school-leavers finish high school at a satisfactory level, they already have more content knowledge than is required for teaching primary school children. What trainees mostly need at this stage is method, confidence and the ability to control a group. Naturally, designers of training curricula have identified this need and place it prominently in the content of the course.

Since the 1950-1960 period, however, the balance in training courses has been tipped in the other direction. The importance of content as against strategy has been stressed in training courses. This has led to the term 'teacher education' rather than teacher training.

The problem is this: which content subjects should be admitted to training courses? In teacher training, it is still maintained by some that any academic subject taught at training college must be justified and defended in terms of its usefulness to the teacher.

The place of content and scholarship in training

There is no doubt that the community -- whether European or Aboriginal -- does require its teachers to be scholars. Teachers need to know what to teach before they learn how to teach.

Scholarship in training courses can have a number of purposes. It can be used for the basic skills learned at primary school. It can be seen to establish a specialism to be taught at secondary level. At the highest level its purpose is to provide teachers with mental, cultural and emotional development, so that they understand not only their own culture but other cultures also and so that they understand their pupils and the communities from which the pupils come.

The justification of content and subject matter in training courses has always been problematic. Some courses limit subject areas to what is seen as useful to the teacher. Naturally English, mathematics and social studies are easily justified because they are subjects taught in school. The teacher needs to have a grasp of these subjects in order to teach them. Any academic subject outside the school curriculum is considered extra.

In training for secondary school work, academic content is more easily justified. However, the range is rigidly and narrowly defind by the school curriculum. Even the internal areas of the subject to be taught are rigidly and narrowly defined by examining boards. Trainee teachers have to choose their specialism or range of specialisms and not vary from it.

In general terms, for the suburban European Australian teacher, in the early 1960s a strategy component as defined before and a narrowly defined and rigid range of subject areas, limited by school curriculum, met the needs of the trainee. Normally the trainee would be Anglophone Australian from a city or large country town and would expect to return to a city or large country town on finishing training.

The place of cross-cultural content in training

Since then the peace and tranquillity of training schemes have been shattered beyond repair by two developments. For one thing, education has been widely extended to non-Anglophone Aborigines and for another, there has been a large influx of non-Anglophone migrants into Australia.

When members of distinctive migrant or Aboriginal cultures are only a small minority in the classroom, the teacher need not take too much notice. But the situation changes when the whole class is Aboriginal or overseas migrant. Even if the proportion is only half, the teacher needs to **know something** about other cultures and other languages. The teacher needs this knowledge to be able to communicate with his students.

Here we find the origin of multicultural schemes of training in colleges and universities. Streams of study are often called 'Aboriginal Studies', 'Migrant Studies' or 'Intercultural Studies'. The academic content in these streams draws from the academic disciplines of linguistics, the social sciences and educational practice. The object is usually to familiarise the average Anglophone suburban trainee with other cultures so that the trained teacher is better prepared to go out and deal with minority groups.

Language science has a vital place in these studies since language and culture go hand in hand.

A European teacher going to teach Aborigines at least needs to know firstly that Aborigines have real languages with real grammars -- that they are not just babble or nonsense. Secondly the teacher must know that there are many Aboriginal languages (over 200) not just one and that the different varities may be different languages not just dialects.

The needs of Aboriginal trainees

The needs of the Aboriginal or Islander teacher from a largely traditional, non-Anglophone background overlap to a large degree with those of the urban European. All trainees need to know about variety of cultures and variety of languages. All need a good grounding in strategy, subject method and general practical group psychology. All need a solid scholarship component.

Looking closer, however, certain distinct differences become apparent. The Aboriginal or Islander teacher trainee is, by definition, a bicultural person.

The school in the traditional Aboriginal community whether on a mission, reserve, government settlement or small town is itself a European concept. The concept of a career trajectory for a teacher and the process of education are outgrowths of European and Asian concepts of specialisation and division of labour.

Many younger Aborigines and Islanders will have gone through the process of explaining these concepts in the terms of a local language to older people in their communities, who lived, and often still live, a traditional non-literate way of life based on hunting, fishing or gardening economies.

But no Aborigine or Islander can go through the present educational system without learning a great deal about European culture and the English language. The trainees and the Aboriginal teachers live at the boundaries of the cultures. They have to interpret the nature of one to the people of another. The process operates both ways, since they must explain local culture to European colleagues on the remote settlement as well as European culture and its requirements to local elders and to local children.

There is also a vital difference between the Aboriginal and the European trainee. Aspects of language and culture which are valuable to the European are indispensable to the Aborigine. That language which can be acquired as an extra skill by the European is, for the Aborigine, part of his

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identity. Customs and tradition are not simply bits of extra knowledge, they **belong** to him.

Important too is the fact that a large part of the European Australian population regards the language and culture of Aborigines as inferior. In areas such as Tennant Creek, Northern Territory, where harsh assimilationist policies were applied in the 1950s and 1960s, these attitudes were internalised by some of the young Aboriginal population. This resulted in people feeling ashamed of their ancestral language and culture, who were not and never could be, accepted into the mainstream of Anglophone society. Fortunately attitudes and alues have changed a great deal over the last 18 years.

Nowadays Aboriginal teenagers are usually aware that the old culture is valuable. With a few exceptions, they are not intimidated by assimilationist policies, ideas or opinions. Whilst they are not ashamed of Aboriginal customs and traditions, what they are often not sure of is the status and value of their language. English is the powerful business and government language used throughout the country in all towns, cities, pastoral properties, businesses and offices. It is a written language with an extensive literature going back over 1000 years. There are many grammars of the English language.

Compared with English, Aboriginal and Island languages have been written only relatively recently. They have not had time to acquire a depth of literature and the prestige that goes with it. Speakers of minority languages around the world, languages which lack depth of literature or technical vocabulary, tend to assume that their languages are inferior to the local official language which usually has a history of literature and technical use. That this assumption is false can be demonstrated by the science of linguistics. But few people who have not studied linguistics would be aware of this. Thus young Aborigines in Arnhem Land are reported as saying that their home language is a 'rubbish' language.

Ironically, the lack of literate tradition is an advantage in Aboriginal languages. The sound systems of Aboriginal and Island languages have been analysed by modern scientific phonemic methods and as a result they have generally straight-forward, systematic spelling systems. By being based on the principle of one constant symbol for one sound, these orthographies are usually more 'phonetic' than are the phonetically spelled European languages such as Italian, Spanish and Croatian. Anyone who can pronounce the sounds of an Aboriginal language, understands the Italic symbols for vowels and knows the Roman script, can learn to write it in a matter of days or weeks. Anyone who understands the local language when it is spoken can learn very quickly to read it. For all vigorous Aboriginal languages, i.e. those with a minimum of approximately 500 speakers, practical orthographies are available, based on the Roman alphabet.

In a teacher training program, the Aboriginal trainee needs to know that his language can be written down just as English can. Given a practical orthography he needs to be able to master it and make use of it. For this he needs a basis in elementary applied phonetics and in the phonics used in literacy teaching. For the trainee proceeding to a school with a bilingual education program, in which Aboriginal teachers will need to use the local language, he needs to develop a high standard of literacy in the home language. Eventually he will have to be able to write continuous texts like stories, letters, accounts of events and reports in the local language. He may need to learn to transcribe stories spoken by others on to a tape. Since the writing of curriculum is often done on site, the well trained teacher needs to be able to write curriculum in the local language, plans, projects and lesson units. In a few areas, even mathematics curriculum is taught in an Aboriginal language.

In the Northern Territory, competence in English is required of all teachers, Aboriginal or otherwise. The Aboriginal trainees from traditional language speaking areas therefore need a good grounding in English as a second language. Many teacher training personnel outside North and Central Australia may not realise that exposure to English for many Aboriginal and Islander children and teenagers is often very limited. When they arrive at college most will on the one hand have a good grasp of simple, colloquial English, but on the other, will not speak or understand formal or technial English. Together with a solid foundation of educated English suitable for teaching situations in a city, the trainee needs to know something of the structure of English under formal analysis: spelling rules, morphology and sentence patterns. Some knowledge of the history of English and its different stages, also helps with understanding spelling and technical vocabulary.

As with the structure of English, so with the structure of Aboriginal and Island languages: trainees need a grounding in elementary linguistics as applied to Aboriginal languages. If trainees come from traditional areas they do not need to learn to speak an Aboriginal language. They need to know that it can be proved that the grammars of Aboriginal and Island languages are not inferior to that of English, that the grammars are not less intricate than that of a European language. At a later stage they need to learn some basic ways of analysing and describing categories and patterns.

Aborigines in remote areas often have little or no contact with migrants. Because of this they need to learn about overseas countries, peoples and their languages and ways of life. Like their urban non-Aboriginal counterparts, they need to know enough geography to place the languages, enough current affairs to know where refugees come from and why they leave and the names of the major migrant nationalities. They also benefit from knowing something of the languages -- simple words, spelling systems -- and the distinctive customs of migrants. Knowledge of the variety of customs and languages amongst overseas nationalities, helps with self-confidence in local Aboriginal customs as compared to those of the European population.

Aboriginal and Islander teachers need to feel confident in the home language and culture. They need to know that industrial and technological superiority as achieved in western culture does not imply superiority in social structure or in linguistic complexity.

Vernacular speaking Aborigines and Islanders need the competence of literacy in their home language. This does not imply that they should be made to use this competence in any way directed by outsiders; but the skill cannot be used unless it is first acquired.

Aboriginal teachers are often put in the position of teaching Anglophone children as well as children speaking a local language. For this they need a competence in the English used by teachers elsewhere in Australia. They need a good level of competence in the active skills of speaking and writing as well as in the passive skills of understanding and reading.

All trainees of any background need some training in curriculum design whether it is for a simple short lesson, for a week-long project or for a year's program. Those Aboriginal trainees who are to return to a prtial or full bilingual program in the local school need to be able to do this both in English and in the home language. If not acquired during training, the skill will have to be acquired by trial and error whilst on the job.

The place of language studies in training

At the moment, language studies -- in the sense of courses studying Aboriginal, Island or Migrant languages -- is rarely an essential part of any teacher training program. It is reported that Anglophone trainees often do not even study the grammar of their own language, English.

Language Studies ought to be an important part of any teacher training program. One reason for this is because teaching depends on the ability of the teacher to communicate through language. The subject area is needed not only for trainees from minority cultures, like Aboriginal or Islander culture, but also for the urban

Anglophone Australian trainee of Anglo-Celtic origin. A language studies curriculum needs to contain a large proportion of applied linguistics.

Since content in applied linguistics is founded on general and descriptive linguistics, a certain amount of general descriptive linguistics needs to be contained in the component. However, it is important to emember the vocational purpose of the overall training. A teacher raining course is there to produce teachers, not pure scientists or linguistic researchers. Any proportion of pure linguistics needs to be organised carefully in terms of its application and purpose. Arid academic exercises are to be avoided.

In any teacher training scheme, a **strategy** component is essential: classroom management, teaching skills, lesson preparation and method. For this purpose in the real situation the teacher must know his or her class. Teachers have to be able to communicate effectively with their audiences. If the students are not of Anglophone culture the teacher needs cultural and linguistic knowledge. It is an appalling state of affairs when European teachers sent to Aboriginal areas do not at least know what the points of cultural and linguistic differences are between themselves and their classes. Even when the differences are known, they should not be made the basis for prejudice or contempt. Much heartache and misery, much cultural shock can be avoided by knowing about attitudes. A professional should not attach attitudes of better or worse, bigger or smaller, good or evil to differences of culture and language.

The European teachers with classes of traditional Aboriginal children are also assisted if they know some of the local language. I am not advising non-Aborigines to use an Aboriginal language as a medium of instruction, much less classroom control, but knowledge and cautious use of that knowledge is a great help.

No scheme of teacher training should neglect **scholarship** -- the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake. The community -- European, Aboriginal or otherwise -- expects its teachers to be scholars. Teachers nowadays need to study subjects such as sociology, psychology, anthropology and linguistics as well as more traditional subjects.

The object of acquiring such knowledge is not so that the trainee teacher can then inflict esoteric knowledge on children. The object is to develop trainees as scholars and to increase their understanding of themselves, of their own language and culture, and of other languages and cultures.

There is a tragic tendency of training courses to tie scholarship to school curriculum so that subjects not in the curriculum are excluded from training. Should scholarship always be only for the sake of subject method?

Every training course needs a component of cross-cultural communication. The teacher needs to communicate well with his students in order to be effective. Teachers dealing with children of a different culture, a different language or both need to have an open, tolerant, non-judgmental attitude towards the differences.

Language studies including linguistics has a place in all three areas of teacher training strategy, scholarship and most significantly in cross-cultural studies. As a component, language studies, need not and should not dominate any course. Even if it is only 10 per cent of a three year course, its cumulative effect can be valuable by the end of three years.

*This paper is a revision of one read under the same title at the the Seventh Annual Congress of the Applied Linguistics Association of Australia, Perth, 1982.